



BT 75 .R23 v.1
Raymond, Miner, 1811-1897.
Systematic theology

Run Dec 7.
Mar. 21.

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY.

BY

MINER RAYMOND, D. D.,

PROFESSOR IN GARRETT BIBLICAL INSTITUTE,

EVANSTON, ILL.

VOLUME I.



CINCINNATI:

WALDEN AND STOWE.

NEW YORK: PHILLIPS & HUNT.

Entered, according to Act of Congress, in the 1877, by

HITCHCOCK & WALDEN,

In the Office of the Librarian of Congress at Washington.

P R E F A C E.

IN the volumes here presented, the Evidences, Doctrines, Duties, and Institutions of the Christian Religion, as the author understands them, are stated and defended with as much brevity and simplicity as the nature of the subject and the author's ability allowed. The doctrines considered, and the general line of thought pursued, differ not essentially from what is common in works of the kind. The topics discussed are viewed from modern stand-points. This has necessitated a more extended discussion than is usual of the Origin, Antiquity, and Unity of the race, the distinction between natural and revealed religion, and the possibility of the former; the doctrine of Intuition as applied in matters of religion; the Positive Philosophy, the doctrine of Evolution, and other phases of modern materialism; the distinction between the Augustinian and Arminian theories of Federal Headship, and specially the wide difference between the Anselmic and Arminian Soteriologies.

History is not attempted; no reliance is placed upon authorities; information as to the opinions of

authors, ancient or modern, is given only so far as seemed serviceable in apprehending the topics discussed.

The chief aim of the author has been to produce such a text-book in Systematic Theology, as he would have in the hands of his pupils. Such a book, in his judgment, should not be, on the one hand, the nearest possible approach to an exhaustive discussion, nor, on the other, a mere outline; it should state the doctrine with all possible distinctness, perspicuity, and strength, and give a moderately full discussion of the most common and most obvious arguments for and against. Authorities, speculations, nice distinctions, side issues, and novelties, if given at all, should be given in the recitation room, in the form of lectures, discussions, and conversations. Though the wants of the student in the Theological Seminary have been most prominently present to thought in the preparation of the work, the author has been mindful of that large class of ministers who acquire most of their theological knowledge by solitary study. We have attempted to supply what we think they need.

Again, so far as is consistent with these above-mentioned aims, the author has had in mind the wants of Sabbath-school teachers and influential laymen, whose relations and duties in the Church require that they be well posted in doctrine, and

that they be able, to some extent, to state and defend our system of theology.

The author confidently hopes the volumes will be found to be what he has designed to make them.

M. RAYMOND.

EVANSTON, February, 1877.

* * * THE two volumes now published treat of the Evidences and Doctrines of Religion. A third volume will follow, treating of Christian Ethics, the Sacraments, and Church Polity.



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2019 with funding from
Princeton Theological Seminary Library

CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.

INTRODUCTION,	PAGE. 9
-------------------------	------------

BOOK FIRST.

APOLOGETICS.

CHAPTER.	
I. REVELATION PROBABLE,	19
II. ARGUMENT FIRST—MIRACLES,	46
III. ARGUMENT SECOND—PROPHECY,	101
IV. ARGUMENT THIRD—INTERNAL EVIDENCE,	116
V. ARGUMENT FOURTH—COLLATERAL EVIDENCES,	176
VI. ARGUMENT FIFTH—ARGUMENT FROM EXPERIENCE,	208
VII. SUMMARY OF ARGUMENTS,	217
VIII. HISTORIC SKETCH,	226

BOOK SECOND.

THEOLOGY PROPER.

I. THE BEING OF GOD,	247
II. ATTRIBUTES OF GOD,	308
III. TRINITY,	374
IV. BIBLE PROOFS OF TRINITY,	395
V. PERSONALITY AND DIVINITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT,	480
VI. DIRECT TESTIMONY AS TO THE TRINITY,	491
VII. THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD,	495

INTRODUCTION.

THE science of theology, like every other, may be said to be complete in itself from the beginning, and therefore incapable of increase, or, on the other hand, perpetually changing, and capable of constant enlargement, according as in the one case the original elements of the science are spoken of, and in the other the discovery of its laws, and their orderly arrangement and illustration are intended. As a body of truths relating to the divine person and his words and works, the whole of our theology is embraced in the Bible, "so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man that it should be believed as an article of faith." But back of this just and wise determination arise other highly important questions respecting the real purport of what "may be read therein," and what may be rationally and truly "proved thereby." To respond to these secondary questions is the purpose alike of Biblical criticism and interpretation, and of systematic theology. While, therefore, as to its fundamental elements, Christian theology was perfected, when the volume of revelation had become complete, yet the duty of thoroughly examining the sacred record, and of properly formulating the things contained in the Bible, was devolved upon the Church, to be carried through all its after stages. And since each age must furnish its own

guides and instructors, whether by the living voice or the written page, not only must there be a perpetual succession of living ministers in the Church, but also new books on theology will always be called for. The new ones may not always be essentially better than those to whose places they accede; it is enough if they are better adapted to the demands of their own times.

Methodism, though not primarily and distinctively theological (in the narrower sense of that term), has always held fast to a clearly ascertained and distinctly pronounced system of religious opinions. It is theistical, as opposed to atheism, and its theism is that of the Bible, as understood and accepted by the prevalent consent of the general Church through all its ages; embracing the great truth of the divine unity, as revealed to the patriarchs and prophets of the earlier dispensations, and of the tri-personality of the Godhead, as taught more clearly in the later and fuller revelations of the Gospel. Its doctrinal positions and associations are with the great body of those who accept the essential truths of traditional catholic orthodoxy, holding steadily to the teachings of the Bible in their most direct and rational meaning. It is, therefore, Protestant as opposed to Romish, in respect to both what it rejects and what it allows. It accepts and emphasizes the distinctive doctrines of the Reformation, of sin, of redemption by Christ, of spiritual quickening, and sanctification by the Holy Spirit, of the life of faith on earth, and everlasting life after death. These things, with their resultant considerations and practical consequences were the burden of early Methodist preaching; and because they were assailed from different quarters, Methodism at length became apologetical and polemical, and in its various treatises used alike for defense and explanation, a specific system of theology was developed,

distinguished for its simple Biblical orthodoxy and its earnest evangelism and spirituality.

Recognizing the design of theology to be to make men real Christians, the relations of religious doctrines to personal and experimental Christian life are kept always in view, and its strifes, whether defensively or offensively, have all been in favor of those things which appeal most forcibly and directly to the individual Christian consciousness, and which tend most certainly to draw men toward practical godliness.

But there arose in Methodism, as that term was at first used, at a comparatively early day, clearly marked theological differences; and of the opposing types we have now to speak only of the Wesleyan. At a comparatively early stage, controversies arose among those who bore the common name, respecting the doctrine of predestination, as held and taught by Augustine and Calvin, and by the Reformed Churches of the Continent, and which was violently asserted by the Synod of Dort, and so clearly and ably formulated by the Westminster Assembly. Against that particular doctrinal tenet, which at that time was reckoned by many as an essential part of evangelical orthodoxy, Wesley set himself most decidedly and earnestly, so that his doctrinal teaching became distinguished for its opposition to the doctrine of predestination and its logical concomitants,—and accordingly the theology of Wesleyan Methodism has always been recognized as anti-Calvinistic; and yet beyond that single element, and its inseparable concomitants, there is a marked agreement between the more moderate Calvinists, and the evangelical Arminians,—and especially those of the Wesleyan type. Respecting the purely theological doctrines,—the unity of the Godhead, the Trinity, the person and work of Christ, and the character and work of the

Holy Spirit, there is really no difference; while in respect to the nature of sin, and of free grace, and of the work of the Spirit in man, they are also agreed, except that some things which Calvinists confine to the elect, and which are considered as unconditionally certain, Methodists contemplate as universal in purposed beneficence, but conditioned on man's free choice of acceptance or refusal.

When by the force of circumstances Methodism was forced to assume the status of an ecclesiastical body, necessitating some recognized standard of religious belief, certain parts of the writings of Mr. Wesley were raised into the position of a theological standard. But a more effective method of indoctrination was found in the earnest and evangelical style of the preaching, which often in a single sermon, would embody, with more or less fullness, the whole body of evangelical divinity. The hymns of the Wesleys, which their people sung everywhere and continually, were surcharged with their theology, and so it happened that through the agency of Christian psalmody, the doctrinal opinions of the Methodist people became strangely harmonized and greatly intensified. While as yet Methodism was without even a written system of theology, there prevailed an almost unequaled uniformity of doctrinal opinions among them.

It was thirty years after the death of Mr. Wesley, and eighty after the origin of Wesleyan Methodism that its first formal and comprehensive system of theology was issued,—the Theological Institutes of Rev. Richard Watson. As the Methodist bodies of both Great Britain and America had long felt the need of such an exposition and embodiment of “those things which were most surely believed among them,” but which had not before been “set forth in order,” the advent of that great work was hailed

with great joy. And yet its real value for Methodism was but partially appreciated, and its service to the denomination has been great beyond possible computation. The time had come in the growth and development of Methodism that a common standard of doctrines, thoroughly elaborated and set forth with such ability as to command the respect of intelligent and independent thinkers, was a necessity as a condition of continued harmony in the doctrinal views of the body, and of safety against the seductive influence of the then incipient modern rationalistic unbelief. And this important purpose it accomplished most effectually. To no other single agency is the continued doctrinal unity of Methodism so much indebted as to the extensive use of Watson's Theological Institutes. In the two capacious volumes in which the work has usually appeared is contained a complete system of theological instruction and culture,—Evidences, Doctrines, Institutions, and Morals. In style it is grave, yet animated, and not inelegant. It is learned, yet not at all pedantic, and though treating of subjects that are sustained by the most sacred sanctions of authority, yet is there an almost entire absence of dogmatism. And though, from the necessities of the case it is the farthest removed from light reading, yet to the interested student of the highest possible truths, its matter can not fail to afford at once pleasure and profit. This great work has been the standard of Methodist theology for a full half century; and, in respect to the substance of Christian doctrine, it was never more thoroughly acceptable than at the present time.

The second generation of Methodist ministers, reared under its teachings, have now possession of the pulpits of the denomination, who are sound theologians and able ministers of the New Testament, because they have made

the thoughts and the arguments of the "Institutes" their own.

But fifty years is a very long time for any single work to retain its hold upon the public mind, and especially to continue to be an interpreter of the thoughts of a large community of Christians. The last half century has also been an exceedingly active period, especially in the study of theology,—and so it has required frequent re-examinations of evidences and arguments, and restatements of conclusions. Nor have these been wanting in Methodist literature. A succession of valuable theological treatises, chiefly in the form of monographs, have been given to the public,—most of them in England, but some also in this country. An original and comprehensive system of theology, by Rev. William B. Pope, of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Great Britain, was published a little more than a year ago, which has been very favorably received by the Church on both sides of the sea. It is at once succinct, and comprehensive, exceedingly clear in its statements, and both progressive and conservative in its doctrinal views and statements, and most thoroughly orthodox according to the standards, and the traditional teachings of Methodism. It is reported that the author intends thoroughly to revise his work, so as to express more satisfactorily his own opinions, and embody the doctrinal system of Wesleyan Methodism, and better to adapt it to general use.

The work of Dr. Raymond, herewith given to the public, is the fruit of a long course of studies and teachings in the subjects discussed. It goes forth without official authorization, further than its authorship, and the medium through which it proceeds gives it a semi-official character. It professedly sets forth the doctrinal convictions of its author,—all which, however, are believed to be in

substantial agreement with the generally accepted doctrines of Methodism. Because of its comprehensiveness, covering the whole field of theological discussion, brevity and conciseness in the several parts became a necessity. Its first aim is to set forth very clearly and with all necessary fullness, the things believed and held as vital and most important doctrines of Christianity. Beyond mere statements, which make up the body of the work, there are arguments, illustrations, and proofs from Scripture, by which the first are made more definite, and the grounds upon which they rest appropriately indicated. The design and scope of the work are such as to enable the careful and intelligent reader to apprehend the general truths of religion, and to know what are the grounds upon which believers build their faith and hopes.

The advancements made within the last half century, in both Biblical and physical learning, and the more thorough exploration of ancient monuments and the better understanding of many things in the history of the Jewish and neighboring nations of their period have very largely changed some of the forms of the evidences of Christianity, and somewhat modified the prevailing opinions of Christian scholars respecting the methods of Biblical interpretation. But in no point have these things changed or discredited any of the traditional doctrines of the Church. And while these things should not be wholly ignored by the theological teacher or author, there is always something more than a possibility that they will be made unduly prominent. It is not his duty to parley with every objector, nor to pause in his work to answer the cavils of every superficial unbeliever. After a general and comprehensive statement of the evidences upon which the Christian system rests its claim to be believed and accepted, the business of the theological teacher is to

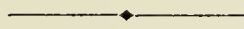
declare and illustrate, much more than to defend. And since many things more or less nearly related to one's religious opinions may be only matters of inference, or the results of peculiar methods of considering doctrinal truths, there should be an avoidance of all unnecessary details in the statements of doctrines. Merely philosophical inferences should be very sparingly introduced, and all unusual interpretations eschewed. Something is due to the authority of the traditional faith of the Church,—the *consensus* of the wise and good of past times; and while guarding against a slavish conservatism, it is also highly important always to bear in mind that the great truths of religion are not among modern discoveries, and that whatever essentially new thing is found in the substance of a theological system must be false.

The design of the study of theology includes much more than simply the acquisition of knowledge, and however excellent its intellectual lessons may be, they are of less value than the influences designed to be effected upon the heart and life. The living truths here brought into view, with all the force of evident convictions of their verity, on the part of him that utters them, and also enforced and vitalized by recognized personal interest in them of the writer himself, changes what would otherwise be a dry array of facts into living and quickening principles, and replaces a formal recitation by a life-giving testimony. All this will be found in these pages by those whose spiritual susceptibilities qualify them to profit by what they read, and to all such the work is commended as able to make wise, without entailing any curse.

D. C.

CINCINNATI, May, 1877.

BOOK FIRST.



APOLOGETICS;

OR,

EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY.

CHAPTER I.

REVELATION PROBABLE.

ARE there adequate reasons for the affirmation that what the Bible says, God says? The importance of this question can not be overestimated. For, though it be admitted that a pure theism is rationally possible, and therefore logically obligatory, it is obvious that the doctrine of a revelation from God is fundamental to Christianity. That God is, and is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him, that man is morally responsible, that he is immortal, and that he is destined to future retribution, are doctrines which may possibly be satisfactorily evident on rational grounds. But if man is ever assured that God has a Son equal with himself in power and eternity, that pardon is possible only through a propitiation of infinite merit made by Deity incarnate, that providence relates to even the most minute of earthly existences and events, and that prayer is efficacious, determining, within limits, what shall be and what shall not be; if man is ever assured of these things, that assurance must

*Certainly the
fundamental
doctrines*

be by a revelation from God. If any man believe these or any of the doctrines, by which Christianity is distinguished from theism, he believes them because, to his mind, there are adequate reasons for believing that God has so said. It is obvious that this question is eminently a question of the understanding, or the logical faculty. The grounds on which a man may affirm that what the Bible says, God says, are such as are apprehended by intuition and logical inference. The state of mind requisite to a fair and proper examination does not differ from that essential to a proper judgment on any other topic of discussion. Such a state of mind includes an intense desire to know the truth, a fixed purpose and disposition to adopt and practice the truth when known, and a desire that that which is desirable may be found to be true.

If Christianity be in itself for man, considered individually or collectively, a system of religion adapted to promote his highest good, it is consistent with logical fairness, it is due to truth, that the student of Christian Apologetics come to his task not only free from all antagonizing biases, not only anxious to know the truth, but also more than willing, even desirous, that the claims of Christianity to a divine authorship may be fully authenticated.

The affirmation that the Bible is a revelation from God postulates the Divine Existence: God actually existing, as opposed to atheism; personal,

as opposed to pantheism; and one, as opposed to polytheism. What we may deem it necessary to say in respect to these things, will be reserved for discussion under the head of Theology Proper. At present, our controversy is with those who accept the doctrine of the divine being and attributes, as generally understood by Christians and intelligent theists.

The possibility of a revelation does not admit of a reasonable doubt. It has been said indeed, evidently more captiously than candidly, that the thing is manifestly an impossibility. God and man are at an infinite distance. How can they touch each other? Can the infinite hold communion with the finite? If the question were, Can the finite stretch itself up to the infinite? the answer undoubtedly would be a negative. "Can man by searching find out God?" The question in this form constitutes an unanswerable argument for the necessity of a revelation. But when taken in the sense intended, as an affirmation interrogatively stated, of a natural and necessary impossibility, it is simply preposterous. Though the finite can not elevate itself to the infinite, the infinite can condescend to the finite. He who created man with power to commune with his fellow-man in thought, sympathy, and affection, can open channels of communication with the creatures he has made. Can not he that made the ear, hear? Can not he that

formed the eye, see? And can not he that made human language possible and actual, construct and employ the means of making himself known to the creatures he has made?

The first point demanding attention is an antecedent objection almost universally alleged by opposers of the doctrine of revelation, and by them considered determinative of the whole question, rendering the examination of evidence unnecessary. It is *the improbability of the thing itself*. That such a being as God is, should do, for such a being as man is, such a thing as to communicate his will to him in words, either written or spoken, is deemed an improbability so great that no amount of evidence reasonably supposed to be within the compass of human knowledge can be sufficient to overbalance it. It is further asserted that a revelation is not only improbable in itself, but is rendered still more so by the fact that God has revealed himself in nature and providence sufficiently for all the purposes of man's earthly life.

We therefore first inquire: Are the indications of God's will respecting man's duty, privilege, and destiny, as found in his works and his ways, and as interpreted by the unaided intelligence of man, sufficient for the purpose of morals and religion? We answer, No! First, because the indications of nature and providence give no satisfactory assurances respecting the conditions of *pardon*, the

extent and *methods* of providence, or the efficacy and utility of *prayer*.

Second, because, with very inconsiderable exceptions, the teachings of natural religion are nearly, or quite, unavailable for the masses of mankind.

Third, because, in the conditions of most men in this life, religious truth is liable to corruption from admixture with error to such a degree as to render it well-nigh inoperative.

THE PARDON OF SIN.

There is in universal consciousness a distinctly recognized conviction of moral obligation; a feeling expressed in English by the words *ought* and *ought not*. This is more than an affirmation of fitness or propriety. It is a recognition of authority, of right to impose obligation on the part of the party to whom service is due. It is still more than this. It is an expectation of results. Whenever any one does what he feels he ought not to do, or leaves undone what he feels he ought to do, he expects his conduct will sometime, sooner or later, come back to trouble him. It is true that in man's present condition virtue seems frequently inconvenient and its opposite the more agreeable. In this consists the strength of temptation. But, however self-denying the practice of virtue and however strong the temptation to evil, we universally

expect that virtue will ultimately result in advantage, and that vice will work a detriment. We expect these results with certainty. We feel that they will, and of right ought to, issue from the course of conduct we pursue. In a word, all men have a conscious conviction that man is made under law—law properly considered; not mere precept, not mere advice, but requirement with corresponding consequences; precept with penalty.

gilt of man
unavoidable

All men are conscious that they have violated obligation. All men know that they have sinned and that they are, therefore, exposed to the penalties of sin, whatever they may be. The penalties of sin, so far forth as their character and extent may be learned, in the light of nature and providence, are, in some cases, and may be in all, inconceivably great. To lose the highest possibilities of our being, since we know not what those possibilities are, is an evil greater than we can estimate. Many of the sufferings and sorrows of the present life, which evils are known to ensue from sin or the transgression of law, are manifestly greater than any one, except the sufferers themselves, can conceive. Can any one, except the victims who have suffered it, have any adequate idea of what it is to have delirium tremens? All the tendencies of sin in this life are toward a condition of remediless misery. The intemperate may possibly practice their indulgence twenty, even fifty

years, and yet reform; but still during all these years they are tending toward a condition in which reformation is an impossibility, and if their intemperate habits be continued they will certainly sometime reach that remediless condition. And that condition is a state of wretchedness and misery inconceivably great. Man is endowed in his physical, mental, and moral constitution, to some extent, with recuperative forces. Medicine in case of physical disease; proper education; culture, in case of mental or moral maladies, may assist these forces, but it may be doubted whether in any case a perfect remedy for the consequences of violated law is provided by nature. Certainly, in most cases, a perfect remedy from natural resources is an impossibility. A man who has neglected the opportunities of his youth, has squandered substance in riotous living, has gone down low in depravities and degradation, may yet reform, and very greatly improve his condition; but to be what he would have been had he from childhood observed the laws of his being, is, so far as any provisions may be found in nature, utterly impossible. A man who has lost an arm or a leg may, by an artificial limb, greatly alleviate his condition, but no artificial appliance can equal that which he has lost. We have, then, this case—a world of intelligent, sentient sinners exposed to the consequences, the penalties, of violated law, in the total

Paradoxical
only by
source of
offended
but.

absence of any known provisions adequate to a perfect remedy. Pardon, or the non-execution of the penalties of transgression, however essential to man's happiness, however necessary for the accomplishment of the end of his being, is a thing unknown to nature.

If, then, pardon be a possibility, it must be from a supernatural source. If man ever fully escapes the consequences of his crime and of his neglect of duty, God must interpose in his behalf and authoritatively order the non-execution of impending penalties. God only can pardon sin.

Can assurances that God will forgive sin be obtained from the teachings of natural religion? Somehow, most men, probably all men, have a conviction that there is mercy with God for the forgiveness of sin, and yet, in the light of thought, it is more natural to conclude that such a thing as pardon, in the administration of a perfect government, can never occur. If the law be just and equitable, if the threatened penalty be justly due, if the transgressor be righteously responsible, if the evidence of guilt be infallibly conclusive, if the verdict be according to law and evidence, if all the purposes for which government is established, and for which the subject is held responsible, require the execution of the penalty, how can the transgressor possibly escape? Among all the voices of nature there is no response.

Again, what are the teachings of facts, facts constantly occurring under the divine administration, facts of universal experience and observation? Can a man take fire into his bosom and not be burned? Can he unharmed plunge the depths of a frightful precipice? Will gravitation cease, or poison lose its power, when human life is periled? Surely, all the indications of nature and providence, in the light of reason, teach that when God's laws are transgressed impunity is impossible, that the hope of pardon, under the divine administration, is presumptuous. But, it will be said, the universal conviction of mankind that God is merciful is sufficient assurance. Let it be granted that this is a bar to absolute despair; and yet, we ask, is it adequate ground for hope? Though pardon may be a possibility, it yet remains to inquire on what conditions, by what process, to whom granted, and how obtained? Do you say pardon is unconditioned and universal? That were plainly the abrogation of law and the annihilation of government; it postulates the failure of authority, a want of wisdom in the legislator, and utter weakness in the administration. Nor is this objection to indiscriminate pardon obviated by the thought that God is sole sovereign, that pardon may be by divine prerogative; since the very idea of law and penalty, of government and an administration, is relative. A sovereign sustains relations to the subjects of his

government, and can not arbitrarily, and irrespective of their rights, do his individual will. He owes as a person something to himself as a sovereign. As a sovereign he owes something to his government, and has rights which he is bound to maintain, and can not sacrifice on mere prerogative. A government, though an absolute monarchy, has no right to discourage loyalty and encourage rebellion or treason by trampling under foot, for mere personal reasons, the principles of justice and equality. Should it be said that these principles are sufficiently obvious as applied to the human government, but that it is preposterous for man in his limited knowledge to attempt their application to the divine government—as if we mortals could tell what God can do, and what he can not do—we reply: The question is not what God can or can not do, in an absolute sense, but is a question of human thought. How are we to think it? Can we see in the absolute sovereignty of God, in his prerogatives as sole governor of the universe, adequate ground for hope that he will pardon our sins? This is the question; and our reply, in brief, is, We can not see how God can, on such grounds, grant a free, unconditional pardon to the transgressor of his law.

Does the nature of the case furnish sufficient assurance of pardon on condition of repentance? It is said, that, between man and man, when an

aggressor with penitence confesses his fault and asks forgiveness, the aggrieved, if a good man, will surely forgive him. If, then, pardon on condition of repentance be characteristic of human goodness, surely we may reasonably infer as much from the infinite goodness of God. We reply: Repentance may be an adequate adjustment of personal injuries, as between one individual and another, but evidently it does not at all affect the legal relations subsisting between the criminal before the law and the chief magistrate required by the claims of administrative justice to execute the penalties of the law on all subjects clearly convicted of crime. Repentance serves no purpose for which law is enacted and penalty threatened. If, then, pardon be universally granted on mere repentance, the governmental ends of law are defeated.

Again, if by repentance sorrow on account of the consequences of sin be intended, this will, sooner or later, occur in every case, and pardon must be granted to all, or the government is partial. If to all on such a condition, the case becomes precisely the same as that of pardon unconditioned, and is an abrogation of law and an annihilation of government.

If by repentance genuine sorrow, sorrow on account of sin itself, be intended, that is a condition which to the sinner in his sins is impossible. On

such a condition pardon could never occur, and perdition becomes, of necessity, universal.

Reserving a further discussion of the theory of pardon for its proper department, we assume that the foregoing is sufficient to show that natural religion does not furnish any adequate assurance to a mind convicted of sin that he may escape the consequences of his crimes; and that though he may have some intuitive apprehensions of the possibility of pardon, he can not, from the teachings of nature and providence, derive any reliable information as to how, or by what means, it may be secured; and we infer that such assurance on this subject, if obtained at all, must come from revelation.

The argument, then, stands thus: By so much as a satisfactory assurance of the divine favor is to man, clearly convicted of guilt and thereby exposed to the penalties of sin, essential to his well-being, by so much, since God is good and may be supposed to grant his creatures all needed blessings, is it presumable that he has revealed his will concerning the forgiveness of sin and the conditions on which pardon may be obtained.

PROVIDENCE.

Does natural religion furnish satisfactory instructions respecting the doctrine of Divine Providence? That God governs the world is a truth fundamental to all religion. It is the basis of all

trust and consolation in pious minds. So far forth, then, as theism is any thing at all, it must be built on a conviction of this great truth. But it is characteristic of all deniers of revelation that their belief in the divine government embraces only a general providence, and ignores or denies every thing special or particular. And this is a natural and necessary result of their unbelief in revelation; for if faith in the divine providence be only such as is founded on evidence attained from science and from history, it naturally recognizes nothing more than a general supervision, or a government by established immutable law. The idea of such a thing as a personal attention to the affairs of a single individual or to the minute events of human history, much more such a thing as a direct interference of divine efficiency in the individual interests of any one, must, in the light of natural religion, be regarded as a superstition.

Such a faith is manifestly inadequate to the purposes of religion. Gratitude for favors received, for blessings enjoyed, submission to afflictions endured, trust and confidence through the ever-varying vicissitudes of the present life, certainly require something more. Under the trials, sufferings, and sorrows incident to man's earthly experience, adequate support and consolation can not be found in any thing less than a well-authenticated conviction that all things, even the least important events of

human history, are by divine wisdom and power put under contribution for the highest good.

Insomuch then as faith in an overruling providence is essential to right-mindedness toward God, essential to competent support and consolation in the experiences of life, by so much is a revelation from God, giving satisfactory assurances of divine guidance, protection, and provision, presumable, or antecedently probable.

PRAYER.

It is asserted, probably with truth, that all men at one time or another, especially in times of trouble, feel an instinctive impulse to pray. Man is naturally so far a religious being that, however obdurate, however habitually distant from devotion, even against his cherished beliefs, in spite of himself, fervent prayer will sometimes spontaneously swell up from the depths of intense emotion. This fact may be regarded as proof sufficient that prayer is somehow efficacious. But without a revelation of the will of God in this regard, the more natural conclusion would be that prayer is of no avail. God is immutable. Can mortal man by petition change his purpose? Most theists deny the utility of prayer, and are therefore prayerless men. But some allow a reflex influence upon the mind of him that prays. It is said that it is well to cultivate the state of mind that prayer implies; that as one

in a boat at sea, with a cable on the shore, may by pulling bring himself to land, so man by praying may lift himself up toward God. To this it may be replied: This is true, but it is not the whole truth, nor at all the more important part of the truth involved. It is insufficient for devotion. It will never inspire a life of prayer. It will never indite the prayer "appointed to convey the blessings God designs to give."

That prayer be fervent and effectual, that it be of any service, it is needful that he who prays have proof, such as revelation only can furnish, that "he who seeks shall find," that "to him," and to him only, "that asks, it shall be given."

Hence, by all the value there is in the soul's communion with its Maker, by all the pieties, amenities, holy aspirings and heavenly delights there are in devotion, it is rendered presumable that God would reveal himself to man by unmistakable assurances that he hears and answers prayer.

2. The teachings of natural religion are unavailable for the masses of mankind. We have seen that the indications of science and history, interpreted by unaided reason, furnish no instructions (or the case is equivalent to an entire absence of any reliable teaching) in respect to three most important interests—pardon, providence, and prayer. Conceiving nature and providence as a chart

suspended for the religious and moral instruction of mankind, our affirmation is that the chart contains no instruction whatever on the three topics named. We now propose to show that though much valuable knowledge on moral and religious subjects may be obtained by the processes of natural religion, the common people are incompetent to avail themselves of the processes. They have no means within their reach of interpreting the indications of nature. The case is the same as if the instructions of the supposed chart were written in a language they did not understand. It is not certain but the case is stronger than we have stated it. So far as the *discovery* of religious truth is concerned, it has never been demonstrated, and can not be, that the human mind is competent, without a revelation, to make even a commencement. It is not known that any people or any individual known at the start to be entirely ignorant of religious knowledge, ignorant of that fundamental idea of religion, the idea of God, have without instruction, at their own instance and from their own resources, come to know God. It can not be shown but that all the progress mankind has made in science, art, philosophy, and religion was based upon original revelations, made in the beginning directly from God. But it is one thing to be able to *discover* truth, and another after it is discovered and clearly stated, with the reasons on

which it is grounded, to be able to apprehend it as truth. In this discussion it is admitted that the doctrines of natural religion, though probably not discoverable by unaided reason, may be satisfactorily recognized as true when the arguments for their affirmation are clearly stated. But with this admission we affirm that but few minds are competent to such an apprehension of these truths as is requisite for the purposes of morals and religion. To the mass of mankind they are a *terra incognita*, a record written in an unknown tongue. That this is so seems evident from the difficulties of the subjects. Suppose that all men, idiots and lunatics only excepted, are competent to apprehend immediately, on its statement, the fact of the divine existence, and that they intuitively recognize the statement as true. That is, suppose that all men have an intuitive idea of God, and that this idea be an adequate ground of moral obligation, so that they are without excuse for their gross idolatries and abominable immoralities, yet, we ask, Of what avail is this embryonic idea for the purposes of a high moral and religious culture? Is it not manifest that the possibilities of man's nature can not be developed on such a basis; that a requisite development requires a more perfect knowledge, such a knowledge as is attainable only by instruction?

Such a knowledge as an elevated devotion

requires is obtained only by such mental processes as are experienced when thought comprehends the usual ontological, cosmological, teleological, or moral arguments for the being of God. Now, leave the last, the moral or experiential argument, and take either of the others, say the most simple, the teleological. Doubtless the common mind at once admits that many things evince design and that design implies a designer, therefore the world must have had a maker; that is, there is a God. But it must be manifest that but few, if any, among the masses of mankind are competent so to penetrate the depths of this problem as to master its metaphysics, as appreciably to develop their original intuitive idea. Progress by the processes of natural religion is to them an impossibility for the want either of natural endowment or educational acquirement, and in most cases for the want of both of these. Such profound topics of thought as the being and attributes of God, moral distinctions, human agency and responsibility, immortality and future retribution, with the theories respecting them, and the arguments required for their explication and enforcement, if restricted within the limits of man's unaided reason, are above the possibilities of the ordinary mind. Added to this inability, from want of requisite natural endowment and learned acquisition, is a strong indisposition toward such investigations. Few men will engage

if prompted thereto only by such motives as natural religion presents, in such profound and difficult processes of thought. Moreover, most men are preoccupied with other pursuits. The duties of daily life so engage them that even if they had the ability and disposition to pursue these studies, they have no time for them. And, most of all, the abnormal condition of the human mind is such that there is a positive antagonism to these truths, an unwillingness that they should be true, which bias is an effectual bar to successful investigation.

Are the teachings of natural religion sufficient for the purposes of good morals?

The process by which man without an authoritative revelation must learn his duty, is by experiment. If, by actual trial, a course of conduct be found to be detrimental to man's best interests, he will possibly infer that such a course is morally wrong; and if the opposite, on trial, be found to be beneficial, he may possibly infer that that course is morally right. Admit that he perceives that the case involves something more than mere expediency, that he recognizes a divine obligation—which, by the way, is quite doubtful—yet there is this difficulty: he must first commit sin, must indeed form a habit of sin, and we know that this is universally attended with a love of sin, before he can find out that it is sin—a case obviously inadequate to the maintenance of good morals among men.

3. In the conditions of most men in this life, religious truth is liable to corruption from admixture with error to such a degree as to render it well-nigh inoperative.

By some means the human mind in ancient times became possessed of many sublime, soul-elevating truths. Athens, in its glory, was the seat of a vast and valuable learning. Her philosophies were many of them well founded and skillfully evolved. Her arts and sciences were adequate to the conditions of a high culture and an advanced civilization. Her ethics were well adapted to social and commercial relations. Her religions also, some of them, were promotive of purity and favorable to the practices of piety. Her philosophers, her warriors, her statesmen, were many of them great and good men. Socrates was a man of many excellencies, and deserved at the hands of his contemporaries better treatment than he received. What Athens was perhaps all the ancient world might have been; and if Athenian civilization was the product of human philosophy alone, if, in fact and reality, it be exponential of what the human reason unaided by any divine interposition can do, then it must be confessed, as every Christian will most readily and cordially confess, that a belief in God, mere theism, though not competent to allay the troubles of the human heart, is, nevertheless, powerfully productive of

highly beneficial results. We are not anxious to maintain that the Athenian and other ancient civilizations were the resultants of revelations given in the beginning, repeated at sundry times and in divers manners, and transmitted by education, commerce, travel, and scientific, and philosophical research; though it is impossible, from the nature of the case or from the records of history, to show the contrary, and all the probabilities of the case favor the assertion that they were. We are willing to admit that so pure a theism as was exhibited in the character, teachings, life, and death of Socrates is possible by the light of nature alone. But we affirm that these truths, derived from whatever source, developed by whatever means, were, in all the ages of antiquity and among all the nations, so corrupted by admixture with errors as that their influence was well-nigh paralyzed.

Unroll the record of the ages and what do you find? What is the testimony of history in respect to the true condition of mankind, especially of those who lived and died without the knowledge of revealed truth?

The fact that men have been atheists, pantheists, polytheists, fatalists, materialists; that whole nations for successive generations during centuries have been held under bondage by one or more of these errors; that their corrupting influences have extended not only to individual character and

experience, but also to domestic institutions, social customs, governmental policies, commercial economies, industrial habits, to all that pertains to man's interests in this life, and to his hopes for the life to come; the fact that piety toward the true God has seemed a thing unknown; that moral obligation toward man has been ruthlessly trampled under foot; that domestic virtue, civil jurisprudence, political economy, progress in science, refinement in art, have been restricted in their influence to a mere fraction of mankind—evinces the vast extent and deadly influence possible to error among men. And though it is doubtless true that the correlations subsisting between mind and truth are such that no sane man can embrace unmixed error, yet the susceptibilities of mind are such that error may be accepted so far as virtually to neutralize the power of truth.

The dictates of natural conscience, the intuitions of the intellect, the restraints of civil law, the amenities of good society, natural phenomena and facts of history, checks to vice and motives to virtue, have been in the world from the beginning. These have all indicated, to some extent, God's will and man's duty. Under the influence of these and, as we think, with the addition of some reflected light from revelation, the minds of some men here and there, one or more at least in all the ages, have attained an appreciable scholarship in

philosophy, science, art, and religion. The experiment has had a fair opportunity, and what the race could or would do for itself, by the aids of a natural religion, has been fully and fairly tested, so that the records of history furnish a fair exponent for a correct judgment in the case. The result is set forth clearly and truthfully in Paul's letter to the Romans, chapter first. We quote him here, not as authority because inspired, but as we would quote from the writings of any other historian or philosopher whose productions commend themselves to acceptance as evidently correct and truthful. Herein it is stated that "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness; because that which may be known of God is manifest in them. . . . For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead; so that they are without excuse." That is to say, as when men perceive the qualities of matter they must, from the necessary laws of thought, apprehend substance in which quality inheres, and space in which substance is contained, so, when men apprehend the material world, "the things that are made," they must, it is "manifest in them," also cognize the Maker, even "his eternal power and godhead." This cognition of God is further

declared to be an adequate basis of moral obligation, "so that they are without excuse." It is also affirmed that the reason why "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven" is, that "when they knew God they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, did not glorify him as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the incorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible men, and to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things. They changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever. Amen." "They were filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, deceit, malignity; whisperers, backbiters, haters of God, spiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful: who, knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them." We present this as a truthful representation of the heathen world as it has been generally in all the ages, and as it is now, with inconsiderable exceptions; and we affirm that this state of things

is a natural result of the "wisdom of this world," a natural result of that philosophy which rejects revelation as unnecessary and improbable, and trusts to unaided reason to interpret God's will as indicated in the phenomena of nature and in the facts of history. Our inference from this state of things is that a more perfect knowledge of God than is attainable by natural processes is desirable; that a code of morals and a system of religion more authoritatively enjoined and more unmistakably authenticated is indispensable to a full development of the possibilities of man's earthly life. If, then, God has invited man to a destiny in this life which he can not, or certainly will not, attain without a further revelation of his will than is made in nature and providence, it is fairly presumable that such a revelation has been somehow and somewhere given. Should it be said that the argument from the moral and religious condition of the heathen world to the necessity of a revelation, and the consequent probability that a revelation has been given, proves too much, since the same argument may be made from the present condition of Christendom to the necessity and probability of a still further and a future revelation, it may be replied that this is precisely what Christianity claims; for it affirms over and over again that man is ignorant, vicious, unsaved, and helpless without supernatural aid, in peril without

the means of safety within his own resources, even though he has at command the dictates of conscience, the teachings of experience, even the revelations of the Bible. Without Christ, in his spiritual manifestations through the Spirit, man can do nothing; every man needs, must have or be lost, immediate revelations made to him personally, over and above all that is contained in the works, the ways, and the words of God.

Since, then, in respect to doctrines of vital importance, such as pardon, providence, and prayer, natural religion is utterly silent; since, in respect to the doctrines of a pure theism, such as the being and attributes of God, the moral agency and responsibility of man, man's immortality and his destiny in the future life, the common mind is incompetent from want of natural endowment and learned acquirement, want of leisure and opportunity, and, most of all, want of disposition to investigate, comprehend, and appropriate to personal and social advantage those profound and difficult themes of thought; since, in respect to whatever truths of morals and religion the masses of mankind might come to know, there is a constant peril and a tendency to corruption and antagonism from an admixture with error; since this deficiency in the teachings of natural religion, this inability on the part of the masses of mankind to interpret and appropriate whatever may be discovered by

the light of nature, and this tendency to a corruption of truth by admixture with error, have been in all the ages an effectual bar to a high state of morals and religion, as is plainly evinced by the actual condition of the heathen world—their condition as exhibited in their prevalent systems of ethics, philosophy, and religions; since the possibilities of man's earthly life, as shown in the advanced civilizations that have appeared all along through the ages of human history, declare God's will in respect to the destiny to which man is invited both in this life and in the life to come—we infer that a revelation from God additional to those of natural conscience, physical phenomena, and the events of history, is so far from an antecedent improbability that we may confidently affirm that it is antecedently very probable; and that this antecedent probability is even a strong presumptive argument in favor of such a revelation.

Are there adequate reasons for the affirmation that what the Bible says, God says?

Assuming that the considerations above adduced are sufficient reply to any and all antecedent objections to the doctrine of revelation, and that they make it apparent that the question we propose is legitimately within the province of logical discussion, we return to the question itself.

CHAPTER II.

ARGUMENT FIRST: MIRACLES.

“Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him.”

THE Scriptures affirm that “God at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, and in these last days has spoken unto us by his Son.” This claim to a divine authority on the part of the writers and teachers of the sacred Scriptures extends to all the books of the Holy Bible. Moses asserted that God spake to him out of a burning bush, that on Mount Sinai God talked with him face to face, and gave him the law and the testimonies which he communicated to the people. The prophets all preface their teachings with the declaration, “thus saith the Lord.” Christ said, “I came down from heaven not to speak my own words, but the words of Him that sent me.” He referred to Moses and the prophets, to the book of the Psalms, and to all the books of the Jewish Scriptures, in such a manner as indicates that he regarded them as of

divine authority. Matthew and the other writers of the Gospels, Paul and the authors of the Epistles all claim that not only were the ancient Scriptures given by inspiration of God, but also that the word which the people heard and received of them was not the word of man but in truth the word of God.

This claim to a divine authority for their teachings they ever maintain by a reference to signs and wonders, which, they affirm, had been wrought in the presence of the people to whom they were sent, and wrought by the power of God, under their direction, for this specific purpose—to authenticate their mission as divinely appointed teachers of God's will and word.

The Scriptures very plainly claim that the signs and wonders wrought in Egypt, the passage of the Red Sea, the pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day, the water from the smitten rock, the manna from heaven, the entire events of the Exodus, the passage of Jordan and the downfall of Jericho, were events which occurred, and could only occur, by the intervention of divine power. The same thing is maintained through all the writings of the prophets and in New Testament times. When it was inquired, What sign showest thou? Christ replied, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. When John sent his disciples to inquire whether Christ was he that should come, or should they look for another,

Christ said, Go show John the things ye do hear and see: the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the blind see, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them. In a word, the Bible claims to be a divinely given book; given as an authoritative rule of faith and practice, as a revelation from God of his will concerning man's duty and destiny. And this claim to a divine authorship and authority it maintains by a constant appeal to signs and wonders such as could be wrought only by the power of God. Which miracles, evincing as they do the incoming of the divine efficiency, the prophets and the apostles claim occurred under the direction of their will, and are adequate authentication of their mission as authoritative teachers of morals and religion.

Now, if this argument be sustained it must be regarded as determinative. The case is this: A man presents himself as a teacher of religion; he claims divine authority for his teachings, that is, he claims that what he says, God says; and as evidence that his claim is valid he proposes to do, and does do, what no man can do except God be with him. Works are performed under his direction, professedly for the purpose of authenticating his mission, which, beyond question, require the incoming of Omnipotence. When such an event occurs, the witnesses must admit the teacher's claim, and respond as did Nicodemus, "Rabbi,

thou art a teacher come from God, for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." To others not witnesses of the miracles performed, to whom the teaching and authenticating works are reported, it is only necessary that the credibility of the witnesses making such report be fully established, and in subsequent times it is only required that the historical evidence of the accurate transmission of the testimony given be also beyond reasonable doubt.

The question then may assume this form, Have we, living in the nineteenth century of the Christian era, in actual possession, adequate evidence that, eighteen hundred years ago and previously, real miracles attesting the divine authorship of the Holy Bible were actually wrought?

POSSIBILITY OF MIRACLES.

Efforts have been made to show on scientific grounds that miracles are impossible. If such efforts be in any degree successful, so far forth as they are successful it must be manifest that any examination of evidence addressed in proof of the actual occurrence of miracles must be premature. On this topic, however, a brief reply is deemed sufficient. The argument in substance is this: Nature's laws are uniform. A miracle is a violation of nature's laws, therefore it is not possible that the latter should ever occur. The affirmation that

nature's laws are uniform, to be of any avail in this case, must be an affirmation that human science has determined all of nature's laws, and is therefore competent to say what is and what is not in accordance with them. It is also an affirmation that all of nature's laws without exception are immutable. Which affirmations are both of them unwarrantable assumptions, and are, logically, a plain case of begging the whole question in dispute. Again, that a miracle should be a violation of nature's laws is more than is required to render it an adequate proof of a divine revelation. It is only necessary that there be indubitable proofs of the incoming of divine power. For illustration, when it is said that God made a passage for his people through the waters of the Red Sea, even if we accept as literal what may be a poetical description of the event, alleging that the waters stood in heaps as a wall on either side, it is not necessary to conceive that the law of gravitation was annihilated. God can build a dam without stone, brick, or timber. It is conceivable that while every particle of matter comprising the waters of the sea gravitated as it is wont to do, Omnipotence is competent to hold back the waters notwithstanding, and to make a dry pathway for his people. "He measureth the waters in the hollow of his hand." If no being but God could provide the means of transporting the hosts of

Israel from one shore to the other, though the event be brought to pass without any suspension or violation of nature's laws yet if the event did occur, then is *it* proof positive that Jehovah is the only living and true God.

Perhaps it is sufficient answer to all pretended arguments against the possibility of miracles, that they assume a pantheistic *cosmos*. They deny at the start the existence of a personal God. Or, if the personality of deity be admitted, it is assumed that God does not uphold and govern the world by an immediate, personal presence and agency, but rather by laws established in the beginning, which laws, it is affirmed, are never in any way counteracted. Without further remark on the possibility of miracles, we assume—if it be an assumption—it being admitted that God is possessed of intelligence and free-will—that he upholds all things by the word of his power, that all the events of the universe occur in his presence, and directly or indirectly by his agency, and that what are termed natural laws are only his ways of working—we assume that it is perfectly competent to conceive that God can do, in the presence of man, what will be in itself a demonstration to man that God did it.

PROBABILITY OF MIRACLES.

On the antecedent probability or improbability that such an event as a miracle would ever

transpire, volumes have been written, and to this question we now direct attention. So far forth as a revelation is itself a miracle, the probability of a revelation is the probability of a miracle; hence, all we have said on that subject bears on this. If it be the will of God that man should attain to a higher religious culture than is possible by natural religion, then is it presumable that God will give to man a revelation; that is, God will make himself known to man in some way above and beyond the ordinary method of divine manifestation; and this is one essential element of a miracle. The other and only other essential element of a miracle in the theological sense is, that that extraordinary manifestation of God, that something done which none but God can do, be evidently wrought to authenticate the mission of a divinely commissioned teacher. By so much as a revelation is necessary and antecedently presumable, by so much is it antecedently necessary and presumable that such a revelation when given will be adequately authenticated; that is to say, by so much is it presumable that God will do somewhat which will demonstrate to those for whom his revelations are designed, that it is he by whose authority his messenger speaks. Hence, all the arguments for the probability of a revelation are arguments for the probability of miracles.

Much that has been said—such as that the

doctrine of miracles supposes that God contradicts himself, working in one way at one time and oppositely at another; or that this doctrine supposes God's works imperfect, rendering it necessary for him to undo at one time what he had done at another—has just been answered in what we have said about miracles as violations of nature's laws.

The definition of the old theologians is this: "A miracle is an effect or event contrary to the established course of things, or a sensible suspension or controlment of, or deviation from, the known laws of nature, wrought either by the immediate act, or by the concurrence, or by the permission of God, for the proof or evidence of some particular doctrine, or in attestation of the authority of some particular person." This definition is well stated, perspicuous, definite, and appropriate; and, in the the minds of candid thinkers, is liable to no objections. But since captious opponents are wont to reply, as above, that this represents God as opposing himself, as doing and undoing, mending and improving his works, perhaps it were well, as saving unnecessary words in discussion, to lay this definition aside. With or without this formula the objection is not valid, since all that the case requires is that somewhat be accomplished which is manifestly impossible to any power less than Omnipotence, which is subject to the direction of the professed messenger's will, and which is

professedly accomplished in proof of the messenger's authority.

But it is sometimes said that if it be admitted that miracles are possible, and that in some circumstances they may be even probable, they can be of no avail to any one besides the original witnesses, since all the evidence others can have that miracles were actually wrought is the testimony of eye-witnesses, and human testimony known to be sometimes false can never be sufficient to overbalance confidence in the uniformity of natural phenomena. This objection, as stated by Hume and repeated a thousand and one times since, is in substance this: Experience is the foundation of human confidence; it is contrary to experience that a miracle should be true; it is in accordance with experience that testimony should be false: therefore, no testimony can be adequate to substantiate a miracle. Of course the objector does not intend to say that a miracle is contrary to all experience, for that would be too evidently begging the question. The thing intended is this: In general experience phenomena are uniform; most men never witness any thing of the nature of a miracle; all men know that human testimony is sometimes false: therefore, testimony affirming any thing miraculous can not be admitted as true; or, in other words, when any thing new is stated in our hearing, if the thing stated

correspond with what we have witnessed or experienced in similar cases, we accept the statement as true, but if it be different from, and especially if it be contrary to, what we have witnessed or experienced, we reject it as false. Experience is the ground of confidence; what corresponds to it is considered probable; what is contrary to it is rejected as untrue. Or, again, to state the argument inductively: All the dead men I ever saw remained dead men; therefore, no man ever rose from the dead. I never witnessed an instantaneous restoration of sight to the blind, of hearing to the deaf, health to the sick; therefore, I can not believe that such events ever occurred. Governed by experience, I must rather believe that the witnesses testifying such things speak falsely than believe that their testimony is true.

Now, is this argument valid? Is experience the basis of all confidence? May not testimony be adequate ground for confidence that something is true the like of which we have never witnessed? To make experience the basis of confidence, the sole condition of credence; to reject as untrue all that does not correspond with what we have observed, is to place a bar to all progress in knowledge and shut up every one within the narrow limits of personal observation.

That men do not do this, that this is not a law of thought in man's present condition, that this

does not correspond with the constitution of things in our earthly life, is manifest from the fact that a very, very large proportion of every man's knowledge, a large proportion of those truths upon which we most confidently rely, which underlie nearly all our acts in life, and upon which we depend in all the matters that interest us, in all the faith we exercise, in all the hopes we indulge, is derived from the testimony of others, and not from our own individual experience. Until children learn by experience to lose confidence in the testimony of others, they naturally believe all that is told them. In the constitution and laws of the present life it is easier, most natural, more consonant with the nature of things, to tell the truth than to speak falsely. The utterance of a falsehood requires invention, affectation, a laborious and difficult adjustment of what is natural and truthful to an abnormal condition of things. In a word, man is made and constituted to rely upon testimony—all the interests of his earthly life, and all the issues of this life to be developed in the life to come, require him to rely upon testimony, to modify his sentiments, sympathies, and affections by it, to construct his character and govern his conduct in accordance with it.

The phrase "accordance with experience" designates the same thing as is usually intended when we speak of the probability of testimony;

“contrary to experience” expresses the same as improbability of testimony, and in speaking of works of fiction the same idea is denoted by the term “natural.” All of these express an affirmation that the fact stated, or the occurrence described, is what, judging from our own experience and observation, would be likely to take place under the circumstances specified. That the probability of a statement has an influence upon the mind of him who considers it can not be doubted. In civil courts it is rightly regarded as an important element in the law of evidence; in works of fiction if the plot and the related incidents by which the plot is carried out are deemed natural by the reader, his interest soon becomes such as not to differ essentially from what it would be if the work were regarded as actual history. The influence of the probability of a statement upon the mind of the hearer or reader is legitimate when it induces in him a greater or less scrutiny in determining the credibility of the witness. It is wholly illegitimate, contrary to the laws of thought and detrimental to the cause of truth, when it induces him to receive or reject the testimony given—testimony as such should be received or rejected according to the credibility or incredibility of the witness, and not according to its accordancy or contrariety with our experience, absurdities and impossibilities only excepted. If a farmer living in

a district of country which I have never visited in casual conversation informs me that his farm, consisting of lowlands located in juxtaposition with high hills, abounds with natural springs of water, since he affirms what my observation and the known philosophy of the case causes me to expect in such circumstances, that is, since his statement is probably true, I am apt to accept it without special inquiry as to who he is, whether a credible witness or not, or why he testifies as he does. But if he assert that on his farm there is a natural fountain, the waters thereof ascending perpendicularly in the air to great height; if I have never seen the like, and, being ignorant of philosophy, know of no cause which produces such effects, that is, if his statement be to me improbable, do I therefore reject it and charge him with falsehood? If so, I assume that nothing can be of which I have not myself witnessed the like. The improbability of his statement, instead of being a reason for its rejection, is a legitimate reason for a more thorough examination of the witness's credibility. If, on examination, it be found that the witness is reliable, one whose testimony can not reasonably be rejected, I believe what he says because he says it, and not because what he says is probable. The same principle applies not only when testimony is different from, but also when it is contrary to, experience—absurdities and impos-

sibilities excepted. As, if a man should affirm that a reservoir on a hill-top was supplied from a river at the base of the hill, if he be understood to affirm that water of itself runs up hill, his testimony is of necessity rejected, as affirming what is impossible; but, if he ascribe the ascent of the water to an adequate cause, as a forcing-pump worked by a steam-engine, and for an adequate reason, as that the reservoir was constructed for the supply of a distant village on the plain, then, though his statement be contrary to any thing I have ever seen, never having seen water by any means raised above its natural level, I may, being satisfied that the witness is unimpeachable, receive his statement as true.

In like manner, if a witness assert that on a given occasion a man rose from the dead, though this statement be in itself improbable, if he refer the raising to an adequate cause, as the omnipotence of God, and for an adequate reason, as the authentication of the mission of a divinely appointed teacher of religion, the case is thereby removed from the category of absurdities, and the testimony, on assurances of the witness's credibility, may and ought to be received.

Having thus disposed of the question of the possibility and of the probability of miracles, we return to the main point at issue. Have we of the present generation in possession satisfactory

reasons for believing that the miracles recorded in the Bible were actually wrought? We have the Bible itself, the Jews, and the Christian Church, with their histories; the Jewish and the Christian Sabbath; the Passover among the Jews, and the ordinances of baptism and the Lord's-supper among Christians. In a word, we have the existing Jewish and Christian religions, with all their institutions, ordinances, ceremonies, creeds, polities, and histories—facts to be accounted for, evidences addressed to sense and reason. The origin and subsequent histories of these institutions must be what the Biblical and ecclesiastical histories assert they were, because the nature of the case is such that the contrary is impossible.

Suppose that Abraham was not the father of the Jewish nation, that Moses was not their law-giver, that they were never in bondage in Egypt, that they never passed the Red Sea, nor sojourned in the wilderness, never dwelt in Palestine, never worshiped in a temple built by Solomon, were never in captivity in Babylon. Suppose there never was such a man as Jesus of Nazareth; that Matthew, Mark, Luke and John did not write the Gospels, nor Luke the Acts; nor Paul, Peter, James and John the Epistles; suppose the Christian Church was not founded in the time of Augustus Cæsar, that Christianity did not become the state religion of the Roman Empire under Constantine,

that there was never any controversy between the Eastern and Western Churches, and that the Pope of Rome never claimed to be the head of the Church—and then tell how it ever came to pass that the world received the records of these things as veritable histories. How could it ever come to pass that any portion of mankind, however small, should believe that these transactions did actually occur as is recorded, when, if they did not take place, every man possessed the means of showing the falsehood of the assertion that they did? Is it said that the fact that men believe a statement true is no proof that it is so? We reply, that depends on the nature of the case. If the disproof be impossible, belief is no evidence. When Mohammed affirms that he ascended to heaven, no man can prove that he did not, and many may believe he did because he affirms it. Their belief in such a case is no evidence that the thing believed is true. But when that is affirmed which, if not true, all men can successfully contradict, the acceptance of such a statement is decisive evidence of its truth. When Moses said, in the hearing of the people, that they had passed dry-shod over the Red Sea, if no such event had occurred, no man could believe what was said. If the Bible was not written and published at the time when, in the place where, and among the people among whom, it claims to have been written

and published, then is it a forgery, written and published at some time subsequently.

That this is impossible is abundantly evident. That the historical records of a nation, with all of its civil laws, both constitutional and statutory, its civil jurisprudence, its religious creed, its ceremonies of worship, its ecclesiastical polity, its land titles, its domestic economies, its commercial relations, its philosophies, arts, sciences, and systems of education, its genealogies and tribe distinctions, indeed, all that pertains to it as a nation, both that which it has in common with other nations and that which distinguishes it from others—that such records, in the possession of thousands, known and read of all, taught to all their children under the injunction of a sacred obligation, preserved in halls of legislation, in courts of justice, in the king's palace, in all places of power in Church and State, and held as sole and authoritative guide in the administration of all governmental and ecclesiastical affairs, regarded as divinely given, and to be observed on pain and penalty of the national welfare and of individual well-being both in time and eternity—that such records, being false and fictitious, a forgery claiming historical verity, could be substituted for that which was real, that the real history could suddenly and entirely pass away from the face of all the earth and be wholly forgotten, so that the false records could be universally

received and admitted as true, is a thing so utterly impossible that it were supremely silly to make the supposition.

We conclude, then, that the present existence of the Jewish nation and the Christian Church, with their institutions, ceremonies of worship, fasts, feasts, and ordinances, is proof conclusive to the present generation of men that the Bible was written and published at the time when, in the places where, among the people among whom, and under the circumstances under which, it claims to have been written and published; and this is proof conclusive that the people who are therein referred to as eye and ear witnesses of the events therein recorded were eye and ear witnesses of those events.

UNCORRUPTED PRESERVATION OF THE SCRIPTURES.

Have we the record as it was originally written? What security have we that the Bible has been preserved uncorrupted? May we not suppose that though as to its general outlines and basis characteristics it was written and published as it claims to have been, yet that it has been changed from time to time, especially that in reference to all that is supernatural, marvelous, or miraculous there have been such subtractions, additions, and modifications as that they have become essentially different from the original writing? All

that has been said above about the impossibility of substituting such a book as the Bible is, it being a forgery, for the true history of the Jewish nation and the Christian Church applies to the question now before us. Added to these it may be further said that the sacred regard in which these writings have been held, the mutual watchfulness of jealous sectarians, and the great number of copies extant, constitute an effectual bar to the supposition of any important corruption. And though in the absence of the art of printing, under the necessity of copying by individual transcribers, many errors were unavoidable, yet various readings in matters of special importance were for these reasons impossible.

We have this conclusion, that the Jewish and Christian Churches were instituted by men who were eye and ear witnesses of the miraculous events recorded in the Bible, and that they adopted the religion therein taught as of divine authority because of their faith in the reality and supernatural character of those events; in other words, the founders of these Churches were witnesses of the events recorded in the Bible, and those events were by them regarded as miracles, as works which no man can do except God be with him. We have a correct record of what the patriarchs and prophets of the Old Testament, the apostles, evangelists, and ministers of the New, wrote, and

said and did, of what they saw and heard, of what they experienced, thought, judged, and believed, and they were not, and in their circumstances they could not be, deceived. What they affirm took place, the events they record are events of real history, and were by them confidently, without the beginning of a doubt, believed to be miraculous.

Were the writers of the Sacred Scriptures and the founders of the Jewish and Christian Churches deceived? Were they enthusiasts? Were the events by them regarded as miracles sleight-of-hand tricks, mere unusual and marvelous occurrences, phenomena from natural but unknown cause? In this year of grace, 1877, this question is perhaps the only one of vital importance in the present discussion. All theories discounting the historical value of the sacred Scriptures are in these days well-nigh abandoned. Assertions such as that there never was such a man as Moses, never such a man as Jesus Christ, never such a real history as that of the Jews and of the apostolic Church, or that the founders of the Jewish and Christian Churches were impostors, or that the religion of the Bible is merely mythological, are made by but very few, and these have little or no influence upon the public mind.

The chief antagonists of Christianity in our times are of the rationalistic school so-called, and their most prominent efforts are to teach a religion

from which the supernatural is excluded. In their creed there is such a thing as religion in the world; there are many religions; Christianity is one and perhaps the best; Moses and Christ were real persons and had a history; their histories are recorded with substantial correctness in the pentateuch and the gospels; the founders of the Old and New Testament religions believed that they were called by a supernatural vocation to be teachers of religion; they believed that the signs and wonders wrought through their instrumentality were wrought by the power of God, by a special and immediate incoming of the divine agency. But, in the judgment of modern rationalists, these men were deceived, and through them their followers in all the succeeding ages, so far forth as they have been believers in the supernatural and miraculous, have also been deceived. It is now affirmed that the Bible, interpreted by a scholarly exegesis, interpreted in the light of modern science, proper allowance being made for man's natural love of the marvelous, for the perpetual effort of all religionists to elevate themselves into communion with the gods, and for the poetic and mythical character of oriental nations, may be rationally construed as a record of real events, all of which occurred through natural causes.

As an example of this method of interpretation, we select what seems to us the most plausible of

any which we have met—the feeding of the multitude with a few loaves and fishes. It is said the multitude consisted of all classes, including both provident and improvident people. The former had provided for their own necessities, and, being in an uninhabited region, and remaining longer than anticipated, were careful of their supplies, and naturally averse to any hospitable distribution. The condition of the multitude becoming an occasion of solicitude on the part of the disciples, they besought the Master to dismiss the assembly, in order that the people might go and buy bread for themselves. The Master said to them, Distribute your supplies. Always obedient, they did as commanded. The example took effect, and all who had provisions did likewise; and the result proved that there was in the company a sufficient supply for all present, with several baskets full remaining. Now, if this be a true representation of the event it is manifest that no one present had any thought of any thing supernatural or even marvelous; and the miraculous interpretation of the record which has for centuries been given to it must have had its beginning at a time long subsequent to the event. The truth must have been well known during the lifetime of the then existing generation. The gospels were written with a knowledge of the facts in the minds of the writers; commentaries immediately subsequent

must have corresponded with the facts; and the bold commentator who should attempt such an innovation and subversion of so plain a case must have awakened a remonstrance of which it is reasonable to suppose the records of the Church would have given some account. The record itself says that "they that did eat *of the loaves* were about five thousand men," not "they that did eat of what was given them by their friends;" again, "the two fishes divided he among them all," not to as many as the two fishes were sufficient for a supply, as an example for others to divide the contents of their baskets among the destitute. The Savior, on a subsequent occasion, when they were on shipboard, entirely destitute of food, and the disciples supposed that in what the Master said about the leaven of the Pharisees he intended to rebuke them for their negligence in forgetting to take bread, reminded them of the five loaves among the five thousand, and of the seven loaves among the four thousand, in such a manner as has no intelligible meaning unless he meant to say that those events ought to have convinced them that he was able to supply their physical necessities without natural means; or, in other words, that the miracles of the loaves and fishes ought to have saved them from any anxiety about their daily bread and from any suspicion that he himself was thus anxious.

The Gospel record of the event and the interpretation given to that record, so far as we know, from the beginning, sets it forth as a miracle of power nothing less than divine. The rationalistic interpretation in this instance is, to say the most of it, barely possible—none given to any one of the numerous instances of miraculous events recorded in the Bible is more plausible than this; few, if any, as plausible; and yet for the reasons above given, it must be regarded as wholly unsatisfactory. In this case it is not alleged that the disciples and immediate attendants were deceived; but in most cases this kind of exegesis requires the supposition that they were deceived, that they referred events to a supernatural cause when no such cause was present to produce them—they supposed that nature's laws were superseded, when in fact they were operating with invariable uniformity.

Are these things so? Were Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, David, Solomon, Jeremiah, and Isaiah; were Zachariah, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ the Lord, John the beloved disciple, Peter, Paul, and James, enthusiasts? Did they in the occurrences of their private experiences and their public ministrations fully believe that God was with them, doing by and through them works which no man can do except God be with him, when in reality and in fact God was no more with them

then than he was in any and in all of the events of their earthly life? To test this question we select for examination what to the Christian exegete involves as great difficulty as any passage of Scripture bearing upon this discussion—the account given of the wonders wrought by the hand of Moses in the land of Egypt. According to this account, the changing of Moses's rod into a serpent and its return to its original condition was a sign which God gave to Moses as evidence to the elders and the people of Israel that Moses was God's messenger; the plagues brought upon the Egyptians were brought upon them to demonstrate to Pharaoh, his court, and his people, that the God of Israel was a God of power; the magicians by sleight of hand, or by the aid of a supernatural evil agency, in some manner, by some means unknown to Pharaoh and unknown to us, did, or appeared to do, to some extent, the same things which Moses did. The inference the rationalist would have us draw from this fact is, that inasmuch as what appeared to be miraculous was wrought by the magicians in the interests of error and were not, therefore, evidences of divine interposition, it may and ought to be inferred that the works of Moses, though apparently miraculous, though wrought by him professedly and in the full and honest belief that they were indeed works wrought by the immediate agency of God, were

nevertheless of the same nature and to be referred to the same cause as the deeds done by the magicians, and, therefore, were not at all evidential of the incoming of Omnipotence. Of course there can be no dispute as to the fact that in all ages and among all nations there have been and now are men, among whom were the magicians of Egypt and in our times mediums and operators in magnetism, clairvoyants, ventriloquists, performers in sleight-of-hand, etc., who bring to pass results which the mass of the people can not understand, explain, or account for—works which, to the common mind, seem to be above human power. More than this, the Bible, as interpreted by Christian exegesis, teaches the doctrine of a diabolical influence, of the existence of demons, who, within limits, are permitted to deceive men with signs and wonders.

Now, to infer from the fact that men are liable to be deceived from the want of knowledge, that they can not therefore know any thing with certainty—to infer, from the fact that what seems miraculous may be produced by natural causes or by supernatural evil agencies or by both, it is not possible to determine positively that any event was produced by a divine interference, is, to say the least, to draw a conclusion not contained in the premises—is what a logician would call a very manifest *non sequitur*. If Pharaoh and the magicians were

naturalists, their efforts were designed to show by their imitations of Moses' deeds that he was not a messenger from God, but an imposter seeking by magic arts to gain influence with his people. If they were, as is more probable, polytheists, sympathizing with the prevailing opinion of their times, that there are lords many and gods many, that these gods have power to influence men to control human affairs, that each nation had its own deity or deities, Israel his Jehovah and Egypt its many gods, then their efforts were to demonstrate that the deities they worshiped were more powerful than the God of Israel, and the contest on the part of Moses was not to demonstrate that monotheism is the true theology (probably the Egyptians were not prepared for such a doctrine, however demonstrated), but to make known Jehovah's power, to show that he is a God to be feared and obeyed; and the result shows beyond reasonable doubt, that by the power of God he accomplished his purpose.

That he did so seems sufficiently evidenced in the fact that the magicians themselves, after a few efforts, abandoned the contest, saying, "This is the finger of God." The multiplication of miraculous works did not arise from the inconclusiveness of those first wrought. When Moses' serpent swallowed those of the magicians, the point in controversy, the superiority of Israel's God, was

decisively determined. The almost inhuman hardness of Pharaoh's heart, his unbounded selfishness, his avarice, his love of power, his tyrannical disposition, above all, the judicial blindness with which God, for the punishment of his sins, had visited him, furnished an occasion for such multiplications of divine power as did at one and the same time rebuke Egypt for its idolatry, deliver Israel from their bondage, and declare the name of Jehovah throughout all the earth.

The pivotal point of the present discussion remains to be mentioned. The deeds done by the hand of Moses are such in themselves that deception or mistake of any kind or degree in respect to the efficient agent by which they were done is not possible. The common-sense of mankind with or without culture in science, skill in logic, or reading in history; ability to form a correct judgment in any matter where the judgment is called into exercise, whether cultivated by educational advantages or left to the spontaneous natural processes of untutored thought, must, in every case, affirm that such works are works which no man can do except God be with him. The difficulty in the case is this: the record affirms that "the magicians did so with their enchantments," which, very naturally and perhaps truthfully, may be interpreted as asserting that the magicians did substantially the same things in three instances, changing rods

into serpents, water to blood, and bringing upon the land a multitude of frogs. A satisfactory explanation of this difficulty is not here attempted; the argument does not require it: suffice it to say perhaps the word "so" in the text was intended to affirm not that the magicians did the same thing but a similar thing, such an imitation by magic as appeared to bystanders to be the same. The record seems to say, and it may be allowed that it does say, that the works were the same, and then, the most probable and most scriptural explanation is, that God, for the purpose contemplated in the transactions then in progress, did permit supernatural diabolical agencies to be exerted to the extent described.

But, this difficulty aside, we affirm that the whole record taken into account, all the works wrought by the hand of Moses being taken in the aggregate, the three instances named included, and in addition the plagues of lice, of flies, of boils and blains, of hail, of locusts, of darkness, and especially the death of the first born, the supposition that they were the works of an impostor or of an enthusiast, of a person deceiving or deceived, is simply preposterous. That God was there, that almighty power was exerted on that occasion, is fully evinced. No rationalistic interpretation can explain the fact that while other parts of Egypt were overspread with plagues the land of Goshen,

where the Jews resided, escaped. No epidemic or natural disease did ever result in the death of one in every house throughout the land the same night, and that one the first born of the family; nor can it be rationally supposed that such a thing could take place without a special interference of divine providence. We have above stated that the present existence of the Jewish and Christian Churches is conclusive evidence that the persons composing these Churches at the time of, and immediately subsequent to, their foundation were eye and ear witnesses of the events recorded in the Bible as the basis of faith in these religions; that is to say, they witnessed what purported at the time to be miraculous, and recognized the Bible record as an authentic statement of the events they witnessed; they regarded these events, as their performers professed they were, as works wrought by divine power to authenticate the mission of the messengers who wrought them. They received them as what the Lord himself said they were, "Signs shown before Pharaoh and his servants that Israel might tell in the ear of their sons and of their sons' sons what things God wrought in Egypt, and his signs which he had done among them that they might know that Jehovah is the Lord." We have said that the nature of these events demonstrates their authorship. We proceed to illustrate this assertion. The exodus from

Egypt is an event of unquestionable history—the Bible record affirms that for the passage of the people over the Red Sea God divided the waters thereof. The division of the waters is called by Moses “the salvation of God;” and in all the Scriptures, in the New Testament as well as in the Old, this event is referred to as an instance of deliverance by God’s outstretched arm. Does the nature of the case admit of any opposite supposition? It is of no avail to say that the waters were divided “by a strong east wind all the night,” unless it can be shown, which can not be, that a natural wind will produce such a result. Though wind were employed as an instrument it evidently required a divine agency to give the wind proper direction, strength, and time of coming and continuance. If we suppose that the sea was made fordable by an upheaval from a submarine earthquake, no matter, for the supposition postulates a divine interference by which the upheaval occurred at the time required for the deliverance of Israel, and the subsidence at the proper time for the overthrow of Pharaoh. No theory excluding the immediate presence of almighty power is conceivable, which shall rationally interpret the record which the people, who made the exodus, admitted to their national archives as an accurate account of what they themselves had witnessed and experienced. We have nothing left us better than to interpret literally the record

of the historian and the song of the people. "The children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea, and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left." "The Lord hath triumphed gloriously, the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea." "Who is like unto thee, O Lord, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders? Thou stretchedst out thy right hand, the earth swallowed them. Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed, thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation."

The passage over Jordan belongs to the same category as that of the Red Sea, and the same rules of criticism apply to each. The one evinces the special in-coming of divine power as evidently as the other. The primary purpose of this miracle is very emphatically asserted. "The Lord said unto Joshua, This day will I begin to magnify thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that as I was with Moses so will I be with thee." "And Joshua said, Hereby shall ye know that the living God is among you." "Those twelve stones which they took out of Jordan did Joshua pitch in Gilgal. And he spake unto the children of Israel, saying, When your children shall ask their fathers in time to come, saying, What mean these stones? then ye shall let your children know, saying, Israel came over this Jordan on dry land. For the

Lord your God dried up the waters of Jordan from before you, until ye were passed over, as the Lord your God did to the Red Sea, which he dried up before us, until we were gone over; that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord, that it is mighty: that ye might fear the Lord your God for ever." The dividing of the waters was foretold. "And it shall come to pass as soon as the priests that bear the ark of the Lord, the Lord of all the earth, shall rest in the waters of Jordan, the waters of Jordan shall be cut off from the waters that come down from above, and they shall stand upon an heap." The event took place as foretold. "And it came to pass as they that bare the ark were come unto Jordan, and the feet of the priests that bare the ark were dipped in the brim of the water (for Jordan overflowed all his banks all the time of harvest), that the waters that came down from above stood and rose up upon an heap; . . . and those that came down toward the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, failed, and were cut off; . . . and the priests that bare the ark of the covenant of the Lord stood firm on dry ground in the midst of Jordan, and all the Israelites passed over on dry ground."

The relations of this record to Jewish history and the relations of Jewish history to the truth and divinity of the Scriptures are such that if its authenticity be established, the whole question of

Christian evidences is determined. At the expense, therefore, of some repetition we inquire specifically, Is this passage genuine? Is it authentic?

The only interpretation discounting or diminishing its determinative force, having sufficient plausibility to be deserving of notice, is of the rationalistic type. It may be said the passage of Jordan was a difficult exploit; its banks were overflowed, the stream was rapid. For a multitude of people of all ages, with all their effects, to pass over such a stream, at such a time, without bridge or shipping, could not be accomplished without great effort and great peril. They did, however, pass safely and with remarkable facility. They accomplished what seemed to themselves well nigh impossible; they were wonderfully fortunate. It was a great event effected with almost marvelous success; it seemed very like to a special interference of divine providence. Now, to a people recognizing a superintending providence, in all the vicissitudes of life, accustomed to receive "every good and every perfect gift as coming down from the Father of lights;" in the habit of giving thanks to God for all their mercies, even for their daily bread, it is to be expected that they would render special praise and thanksgiving to God for such a distinguished favor; it is to be expected that such an event, forming one of the great outlines of their national history, would occupy a prominent

place in their historical records. It is to be expected that poets, orators, and rhetoricians would dwell upon it, and embellish it with their imaginings; and it is, says the rationalist, very reasonable to believe that in times subsequent the imaginations of the poet were substituted in the national archives for the records of the historian.

In reply it must be admitted that the book of Joshua, precisely as we now have it, was not written by Joshua himself—for events are recorded therein which did not occur until after his death—but, from the general character of the book itself, its subject matter, and the circumstances of the times, it is manifest that the greater part of it is his composition, and that the book as we now have it was a compilation of some subsequent writer from ancient documents, whose authenticity was matter of public recognition. One single consideration seems sufficient to determine this. The book of Joshua is largely occupied with an account of the distribution of the lands of Canaan among the tribes of Israel. It was the public record of that distribution, the legally authoritative title by which the tribes for subsequent ages held possession of their lands. It must then have been contemporary with Joshua; must have been published under his authority as the only means of making it a document to be observed by the people with the sanctions of a divine obligation.

Now, to suppose that a legal paper of the character and importance of this was originally written or subsequently corrupted without remonstrance with poetical fancies and rhetorical embellishments is to suppose what is quite unusual and highly improbable. Again, to suppose that the facts in such a case should be so thoroughly supplanted by the fancies of the poets, as that the entire knowledge of these facts should pass from the memory of man, and that the documents containing the true history of those facts should become totally extinct, is equally untenable. In a word, the supposition can not be reasonably entertained—we have nothing left but to take the record before us as authentic history, and the argument is conclusive; God was there, his power was specially exerted to divide the waters, and that to the end “that the people might know that God was with Joshua as he had been with Moses,” “that all the people of the earth might know the hand of the Lord that it is mighty,” “that the people might fear the Lord their God forever.”

For the reasons above given we aver that the accounts of the passages of the Red Sea and of the river Jordan are to be received as veritable histories of actually occurring events; and for the same reasons all the histories recorded in the books of Moses and Joshua are to be also so received, including the histories of the creation, the

events of the garden, the flood, the confounding of language, the lives of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, and Moses, the voice of God from the burning bush, the pillar of fire by night and of cloud by day, the manna given for daily food, the water from the smitten rock, the fiery serpents, the Shekinah in the holy of holies, the thunders and lightnings of Sinai, from out of which God gave to Moses the law and the testimonies, and the cloud of glory covering the mount and oftentimes filling the tent of the tabernacle.

NEW TESTAMENT MIRACLES.

The resurrection of our Lord from the dead is the leading and crowning miracle of New Testament history; if it be without doubt and beyond question a veritable fact, it carries with it the whole history as recorded in the Gospels and the Acts, and as illustrated in the Epistles.

That Jesus actually died was never questioned in the ancient times. The soldiers, when they came to hasten death by the breaking of bones, were fully satisfied that Jesus was already dead; the multitude were satisfied and dispersed; the chief priest and the Sanhedrim were satisfied; Pilate credited the report, and gave orders that the body be delivered to Joseph; Joseph wrapped it in a clean linen cloth and laid it in his own new tomb; the disciples relinquish all hope, sadly conceiving

that the end had come; the shepherd was smitten, and they of the flock fled; Mary Magdalene and the other Mary alone remained in the shadows of the night, sitting silently, mournfully, over against the sepulcher; they themselves at last retired to the quiet of their homes, secretly sighing over their great disappointment and unmitigated bereavement; the body of Jesus lies alone in the region of the dead; the Jewish Sabbath, with its solemn ceremonies and symbolic sacrifices, according to legal requirement and social custom, is carefully observed; the friends of Jesus are but slightly if at all interested in the accustomed devotions because of their great sorrow, and the enemies of Jesus are alike indifferent to altar, to sacrifice, and to ceremony, because of their great joy in having triumphantly overcome their foe. One sole trouble agitates them—they remember that Jesus said he would rise from the dead. They secure through Pilate the seal of the state for the stone of the sepulcher and a quaternion of soldiers to guard the body lest the disciples steal it away and report that Jesus was risen as he said, which last case they anticipated as worse than the first. The dawn of the first day of the week is ushered in, the women with spices for embalming the body approach the sepulcher, and behold! the body is not there.

That the body was missing was never in those

times questioned; no man then living except the disciples even pretended to know any thing of its place or condition. If it did not rise from the dead and afterward ascend into heaven as the disciples affirmed, then whither it was carried and where it slumbers, by what means it was removed, and how it was disposed of, must remain unknown to human history till the time when all secrets shall be revealed. The only account antagonizing that of the apostles is the report of the soldiers that "while they slept his disciples came and stole him away." The record affirms that they were stimulated to make this report by a large bribe from the chief priests and the elders. Modern criticism has presumed to maintain that this is highly improbable—that on the supposition that the occurrences at the sepulcher were accurately reported to the priests and elders by the soldiers to be such as is recorded, it is not presumable that the priests and elders would have attempted to falsify such stupendous transactions by a report so feeble and so self-destructive as the one in question. But if we remember that the Sanhedrim had put Jesus on trial for blasphemy; that, when the high-priest adjured him by the most high God to make his plea, saying, "Tell us, art thou the Son of God?" he said "Thou sayest that I am," so that the verdict was, on his own confession of the fact alleged, confirmed by other witnesses, and, in the

judgment of the court, the charge was sustained,—if we remember that, according to the Jewish law, blasphemy was a capital offense,—that the prosecutors were under strong excitement from fear of the populace and from the restraints of the Roman authority; that under these circumstances they had secured his execution, and now no fear or apprehension remained except this one, that his disciples, to make good their Master's words, would steal the body and affirm its resurrection; that it was this very fear that had caused them to guard the sepulcher by a band of soldiers,—if we remember these things, it will not appear strange that this thought was the first to occur to them under the perturbation which the report of the soldiers would naturally produce—the thing we feared, in spite of all our precautions, has come to pass. In their intense desire to have it so reported, they readily ignore all that opposes their wish; they do the only thing they can do except to acknowledge their great error and expose themselves to all the consequences of having put to death the nation's only hope.

The testimony of the soldiers, as the case now stands, must be entirely omitted from all investigations respecting the final disposal of our Lord's body, for they themselves say they slept, and the record says they were as dead men. Their report that the disciples stole the body away

is itself incredible, since they were stationed at the sepulcher under the penalty of death to prevent that very thing, and besides, they affirm that it took place while they were asleep. That their report was not credited either by priests or people is evidenced by the fact that at no time when the apostles were arraigned before the courts for preaching Christ and the resurrection, though in the presence of the courts themselves they boldly affirmed that Christ, whom the elders of the people had crucified, was indeed risen from the dead, they were never confronted with this story of the Roman soldiers. The fact was, this report was instantly dropped as an extemporized resort of the priests when in the emergency they had no other subterfuge in which they might hope for protection. We have, then, no other theory for the final disposition of our Lord's body but that of the resurrection, and no other testimony but that of the apostles.

What is the probability of the theory? and what the value of the testimony? To see the probability of such an event as the resurrection of Christ, the whole Gospel must be taken into account; the whole antecedent credibility of the story itself consists in its harmony with the system with which it is connected. To the Christian believer who regards Jesus as the Son of God and Savior of the world, the Messiah who came to

save his people from their sins, to conquer death and ascend up on high, it was not possible that he could be held in the bonds of death; it was necessary that he should rise from the dead, lead captivity captive, and bring his people to honor, glory, immortality, and eternal life. To the believer in Christ as divine the resurrection is an event most consonant with the economy of grace. But suppose Christ a mere man divinely appointed to lay the foundation of the world's religion, it must be conceded that, to say the least, his resurrection was not an inappropriate authentication of his mission, and that the importance of an adequate authentication would justify an event even of the magnitude of a resurrection from the dead. Unless the whole Gospel be a fable the resurrection of Christ is antecedently a probable event. The question, however, in all its vital interests, turns wholly upon the testimony of the disciples. If they are witnesses possessed of all the elements of credibility, if their testimony be indisputably such as is sufficient to establish any other fact, then must we admit the miracle of Christ's resurrection as a veritable fact of history, or we must exclude as a ground of confidence all sources of knowledge beyond the narrow limits of personal experience.

That Jesus was alive after his crucifixion, death, and burial is evidenced by the testimony of the

apostles that they saw him, heard him, handled him; they had the evidence of their senses that the appearances were real—not spectral illusions, not apparitions; the form before them was not a spirit, it had flesh and bones, it was the same that hung on Pilate's cross and lay in Joseph's tomb: for he showed unto them his hands and his feet, and invited Thomas to put his finger into the print of the nails and to thrust his hand into his side; it was the same as had broken daily bread and eaten with them for three years and more, for they gave him a piece of broiled fish and of an honey-comb, and he took it and did eat before them. The disciples during forty days had abundant opportunity to test by their senses the question of identity between what purported to be the person and bodily presence of their crucified Master and the Jesus of Nazareth with whom they had been associated during the years of his public ministration. Should it be said, with a view to remove this testimony from the evidence of the senses, that Mary did not know him at the sepulcher, that the disciples on the way to Emmaus did not know him, that he came to them walking upon the waters in the dead of the night, that he joined their company in the upper room apparently without opening the door, and that he frequently vanished suddenly out of their sight, we reply, this affects not the question of identity, since we know not what may

be possible to immortalized substance. What was a mortal body subject to the laws of gross earthly matter may without the destruction of identity become, after resurrection from the dead, capable of some of the phenomena of spirit.

The disciples were not idiots nor insane persons, nor were they fanatics. They not only had opportunity to know of the facts to which they testified, but they also were men of sound common sense, capable of judging of the facts they witnessed. The rationalist, who denies all supernatural endowment, judging from what the apostles accomplished in their subsequent lives, and from the effects of their deeds as evinced during all the centuries since, and as now extant in all the habitable parts of the globe—the rationalist surely must concede that they were men of most extraordinary endowments, greater than any other twelve men that ever lived. But, rationalism aside, and supernatural endowments discounted, the lives of the apostles clearly evince, to say the least, a discernment, a soundness of mind, a correctness of judgment, adequate to all the ends of reliable testimony. They were competent witnesses.

They not only had sufficient opportunities, were not only adequately competent, they were also men of integrity. That a man must be regarded and treated as honest until it has been proved that he is guilty of fraud, that he is truthful until he has

been proved guilty of falsehood, applies to him as an individual, is due to him as a person, belongs to every one as a natural right. But as to a witness upon whose testimony important interests are dependent, if his integrity be questioned, it is due to the interests of truth that his integrity be clearly proved before his testimony can be accepted as decisive.

The question, then, of the integrity of the apostles is pivotal. It has been so regarded in all the controversies of the ages. Christian apologists have deemed it necessary that this point of attack be strongly defended, and the enemies of Christianity have rightly judged that their success or failure was suspended upon their ability to carry this point. Modern rationalism has indeed apparently changed the chief point of attack and endeavored to maintain that the apostles were good men, but enthusiasts; and this is the ostensible front with which it antagonizes the claims of the Church. But it must be manifest to the careful observer that rationalism changes front as its convenience requires. For when the testimony of the apostles concerning plain matters of fact, known by the testimony of the senses—such as the fact before us, that of the resurrection—where enthusiasm can have no power to misconstrue, when apostolic testimony on such subjects is under discussion, modern rationalism every time avers

that because of the imperfections of the apostles, their weakness as men, and especially their zeal for their cause, they must be expected to equivocate, to resort to mythological constructions, and to state facts in such a way as in their weak and partial judgments would be most favorable to their cause. That is to say, the apostles, after all, though good men, are not reliable witnesses; in plain language, they are dishonest men, false witnesses.

The integrity of the apostles is sufficiently evidenced by the facts just now alluded to. This has been a chief point of attack for centuries. Opponents have exhausted their resources, every possible method of warfare has been resorted to, all that scientific, philosophic, legal, and philological investigations can do has been done to destroy public confidence in the integrity of these men, and yet to this day they remain unimpeached; and, our enemies themselves being judges, men of purer moral and religious character than that of Christ and his witnesses have never lived.

Of the lives, character, and conduct of these men outside of their religious career but little is known. But the Scripture history is itself competent testimony. Even our opponents themselves must admit that, the miraculous and supernatural omitted, the Scriptures are as reliable as any other ancient history. We know as well the characters of Paul, Peter, James, and John as we do those

of Socrates, Plato, Seneca, and Cicero. As to their characters as delineated in the New Testament, confirmed by other records and contradicted by none, it is not necessary to speak. It is known and read of all men. They were holy men of God, incapable from their moral conscientiousness of double dealing, equivocation, or false representation in any manner or degree.

But, lastly, the circumstances of the case furnish no motive for misrepresentation. They had no interest prompting them to make a false report. They were disinterested witnesses. We have seen that they possessed opportunity, discernment, and integrity, and now we add this last element of credibility—disinterestedness.

It is sometimes alleged that the disciples of Christ having been induced from some reason to espouse his cause—perhaps from their Jewish expectation of a coming Messiah and belief that Christ was indeed he that should come, or perhaps from the excitement of the times, or from the general popularity of Christ among the common people—their party spirit was sufficiently intense to prompt an adhesion to the cause even in its emergencies, and to induce prevarications and misrepresentations in its support. Again, it is affirmed, that being poor and obscure men, promoted by Christ's appointment to the office of apostleship, their love of notoriety was sufficient to prompt

the deceptions charged against them. To ascribe either or both of these or any similar motives as incentives inducing them to assert what they knew to be false, and thus impose upon mankind, as a religion, that which they knew to be a fraud and a deception, is to affirm that they were the weakest and wickedest of men. To affirm that while they knew that the supernatural is totally excluded from human experience, and that, therefore, all their testimony to what was miraculous is false, they nevertheless saw such sublime philosophy, such pure ethics, in the teachings of Christ that they trusted that the Gospel itself from its inherent excellence would bear them through, though they sought its success among the people by bearing false witness, is to assert that they were at once both the wisest of philosophers and the craftiest of deceivers. To assert that they foresaw the issues of their course just as they have been developed in the history of the world thus far in the Christian Era, and are to be developed in the future, and that the desire for posthumous fame prompted whatever the exigencies of the times required, even falsehood and imposition, with bonds, imprisonment, and martyrdom, is to assert that they possessed a knowledge of the future which is superhuman and that they were at once the most selfish and unselfish of men.

The Apostle Paul asserts in his letter to the

Corinthians, that Christ died, was buried, and rose again the third day; that he was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve, after that of above five hundred brethren at once, after that of James, then of all the apostles, and last of all, he says, "he was seen of me also as of one born out of due time." In which he can not be understood otherwise than as asserting that Jesus was revealed to him as risen from the dead; that he saw him alive, and by some means knew that it was he that had been crucified, dead and buried. He further affirms that the proclamation of the resurrection formed a prominent fact of the Gospel which he and the other apostles preached and which the people believed and which they trusted, insomuch as he further affirms that if there be no resurrection and Christ is not risen, they were found false witnesses, their preaching was vain, the people's trust and confidence was vain, believers were yet in their sins and the whole Gospel was a fable and a sham—worse, a forgery and a fraud, propagated by falsehood deserving universal execration. The author of these declarations enjoyed in his youth the highest educational advantages of his times, first in his native city of Tarsus and afterwards under the tuition of Gamaliel at Jerusalem. From childhood he had lived after the manner of the strictest and most popular of the sects of the Jewish religion. His natural endowments, as evinced

by his subsequent life, were extraordinary; his consequent literary fame and religious reputation secured for him, when yet a youth, promotion in civil life; he, as a member of the execution staff, held the clothes of those that stoned Stephen; he afterwards received a commission under the authority of the emperor and with the sanction of the high-priests and the Sanhedrim to go to Damascus with power affecting life and limb.

Suddenly his literary fame, his religious reputation, his civil prospects became as nothing in his estimation. He abandons relatives, friends, neighbors, and acquaintances, all the associations of his domestic, social, literary, civil, and religious life. He goes from city to city, from continent to continent, in labors abundant by night and by day, preaching Christ and him crucified, with the doctrine of the resurrection and hope of eternal life. He every-where urges the strictest morality and highest forms of piety; every duty of man to man, and of man to his Maker, ever known among men in the purest systems of philosophy and religion were insisted upon in his public preaching, in his private conversation and in his epistolary correspondence, under the pains and penalties of the wrath of God. In the discharge of these duties he suffered the loss of all earthly good, endured hunger and thirst, heat and cold, shipwreck, bonds, stripes, and imprisonments, and at the last died the death of a

martyr. Now, to suppose that the starting point of such a life, its underlying motive, its sole inspiration, its alpha and omega, was the purpose to publish a falsehood, and that in the interests of a fraudulent imposition, and to believe such a supposition well founded, is to evince such a mental aberration or abnormal credulity as is possible only to minds maddened by an infuriating prejudice.

The testimony of the twelve to the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead is reliable. There is nothing left us but to regard the record as accurate history, and the event recorded as an actual occurrence. Jesus rose from the dead, and therefore the whole history of his life recorded by the evangelists is authentic. Is it said that an event of such importance as that of the resurrection, sustaining such relations to the whole system with which it is connected, fundamental to Christian apologetics, deserves the highest possible authentication, and that, therefore, we might expect that Jesus would have appeared after his resurrection in the public squares and courts of Jerusalem, manifesting himself to hundreds and thousands and not to the twelve only? We reply: He could not thus manifest himself to all men in all the ages; some must receive the doctrine on the evidence of testimony.

Now, the state of mind which will reject the testimony of twelve credible witnesses will reject

that of thirteen, and thirteen thousand as well. The case is a case of evidence, and evidence complete is complete. The testimony of twelve men to the fact of having seen and heard and handled a living person, confirmed by the testimony of five hundred others, sustained by all the circumstantial evidence known to bear upon the case, is sufficient for a verdict that will infallibly correspond with the truth.

The Bible as a history is as reliable as any history extant, is confirmed by other histories, and is contradicted by none. Its literature, its allusions to the customs of the times, correspond with all that is known in respect to such matters. The relics of past ages, dug from the ruins of buried cities, illustrate and confirm its testimonies, and demonstrate that it is an accurate record of the times and events of which it treats. On historical evidences sufficient to establish any theory pertaining to a discussion of past occurrences, the events of the exodus from Egypt, especially the passages of the Red Sea and of the river Jordan, and the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ from the dead, are proved to be veritable facts. The occurrence of those events establishes the theory of miracles. These miracles, because of their inseparable connection with the whole Bible record, carry with them the verity of all other events clearly recorded and set forth as miraculous.

It is not necessary, nor is it wise, to construe all that is extraordinary or marvelous, as instances of special and immediate interferences of divine power. If any event recorded in the Scriptures, however different from the ordinary course of human affairs, may be reasonably referred to natural causes, it should be so referred. For illustration, if to the reader the account given of the feeding of thousands with a few loaves admits of the supposition that the agency of Christ and his disciples consisted solely in exhibiting an example of hospitality, let him so interpret it. But, on the contrary, where such an interpretation compromises the historical verity of the record or the known character of the actors, it can not be admitted; as when it is alleged in the case of Lazarus that he was very sick, disease had reduced his body to the appearance of a corpse, that he caused his body to be clad in grave-clothes and laid in the family tomb to furnish the Master with an opportunity of making strong impressions upon the popular mind, and that when the Master came he accepted the occasion and called Lazarus as from the dead,—such an interpretation, since it makes the Savior and the family at Bethany deceivers, conspirators for the publication of a falsehood, must be rejected. Again, it is not necessary, nor is it wise, to insist upon any special form or manner of a miracle as that it must be miraculous in the

highest conceivable sense. For instance, should it be insisted upon that the waters of the sea and of the river were removed by the agency of winds or earthquakes, nothing is lost by admitting the allegation, nothing gained by rejecting it, since in any case the effect produced must be referred to the divine power as its cause. Again, when we read of the smitten rock and the waters gushing therefrom, it is not necessary to conceive that water was then and there created from nothing. If it be insisted that a natural fountain was pressed and held in restraint beneath the superincumbent rock, and that the rock being removed the water flowed forth naturally, let it so be, since the instantaneous dashing of the rock in pieces by the smitings of a small rod requires the incoming of supernatural power. Again, when water is turned into wine, it is not necessary to conceive a creation but a hastening of vegetation and the other processes by which wine is produced. In this miracle by which wine is furnished for the guests at the wedding, and in that by which bread was supplied for a multitude, it is not inappropriate to conceive that the chemical elements of which bread and wine are composed were suddenly brought together and combined in the requisite proportions. Such an event as evidently requires divine power as does creation from nothing. In a word, in all cases where a rationalistic interpretation is admissible

let it be admitted. In all cases where the effect produced can be referred to the employment of natural agencies, let those agencies be taken into account, and in no case is it necessary to suppose that God counteracts himself or annihilates natural laws. The evident incoming of divine power, special and immediate, professedly exerted for the authentication of the mission of a teacher of religion, is all that is essential to an adequate defense of the claims of the Bible to a divine authorship.

In this view we trust the present discussion will be regarded as a conclusive argument in favor of the inspiration of the holy Scriptures. Because beyond reasonable question miracles have been actually wrought for the specific purpose of attesting the Sacred Word, we deem it thereby demonstrated that what the Bible says, God says.

CHAPTER III.

ARGUMENT SECOND: PROPHECY.

“He that revealeth secrets maketh known to thee what shall come to pass. I have told you before it come to pass that when it is come to pass ye might believe. Produce your cause, saith the Lord; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth and show us what shall happen, or declare unto us things to come.”

No being but God, and they to whom he has revealed it, can certainly foretell a future event. When any man, therefore, does pre-announce what is conditioned solely upon the foreknowledge of God, and it comes to pass as foretold, it must be either an instance of accidental coincidence or a revelation from God. If a series of prophecies relating to a long continued series of events, in which case accidental coincidence is impossible, be uttered and thereafter in proper time be accurately fulfilled, the prophecy with its fulfillment is conclusive proof that the prophet spoke and wrote as he was moved by the Holy Ghost. If the prophet profess to be a divinely commissioned teacher of religion, and profess that the prophecy which he

utters is given with the express design that when it is come to pass the world might believe, then is his prophecy and its fulfillment conclusive proof that he is a messenger sent from God, and that his communications are a divine revelation.

OBJECTIONS.

The antecedent objections to the argument from prophecy usually put forth are of but little weight, and yet they may be deemed by some worthy of at least a brief reply.

The most common is on this wise: All future events are either necessary or contingent; if necessary, they are made so by the present existence of the causes which will produce them; therefore, their foresight is possible to a wise calculation, and they may be foretold without the interference of Omniscience. If they are contingent, they can not be foreknown, and therefore can not be foretold by either man or God. In a word, for the foreknowledge of necessary events revelation is not necessary; the foreknowledge of contingent events is impossible; therefore, in no case can prophecy avail to authenticate a revelation. The publication of such an objection is useful to mankind, chiefly as it furnishes an example showing to what sophistry men can resort in the emergencies of a bad cause.

It is evident on a moment's reflection that

there are very many necessary events whose causes, though existent, the human mind is incompetent to cognize. If the cause is unknown no calculation as to its effects is possible, so that a prophecy of very many necessary events may be evidence of revelation.

Again, as to contingent events it is not true that their foreknowledge is impossible; *will be* is not the same as *must be*. An event may be certain and therefore an object of knowledge, and yet it may be just as certain to the same prescience that the opposite of that event is possible. Contingencies may be foreknown to Omniscience; prophecies respecting them may be made; when made and fulfilled they indisputably evince a revelation from Him who only sees the end from the beginning.

It is again objected that the interpretation of prophecies is difficult. Some of them are so obscure that no man of a logical habit can be satisfied that he understands what is intended; if they are prophecies and have been fulfilled, it is as yet unknown. Others seem to have a double and perhaps a germinant intent, and are capable of almost indefinite application. The reply to these and all similar criticisms is, that the reference in the apologetic argument is not to obscure and difficult prophecies; these are left for the solutions of subsequent exegesis and the illustrations of

future history. But, these aside, there remain instances abundant, for the argument, of plain prophecies with obvious fulfillments.

DANIEL'S PROPHECY OF THE FOUR GREAT KINGDOMS.

Daniel lived six hundred years before Christ; the book bearing his name was written by him, as is evident from the frequent use of the first person. The prophecies it contains were matters of public record, recorded among the sacred books of the Jews, more than two thousand years ago; their fulfillment is found in the leading and most prominent events of governmental history, occurring from the time the prophecies were uttered till the present; the existing condition of the civil governments of the world together with the past history and present condition of the Christian Church are also clearly foretold, and the same prophecy as generally interpreted by Christian commentaries foreshadows the mutual relations of Church and State as they are to be from henceforth to the end of time.

Nebuchadnezzar in a dream saw a colossal metallic statue standing in the midst of an extended plain. The head thereof was of gold, its breast and arms of silver, its belly and thighs of brass, its legs of iron, and its feet part of iron and part of clay. From a distant mountain, without any visible agency, a stone was severed; it moved in

the direction of the image, smote it, dashed it in pieces, ground it to powder, and the image was scattered by the winds of heaven; the stone became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

According to the interpretation the head of gold represented the Babylonian Empire, then existent and supreme among the governments of the earth. The other parts of the image represented three other governments, which were to possess universal jurisdiction. They were to follow in immediate succession, and each succeeding government to be inferior to its predecessors as silver is inferior to gold, and brass to silver. After these four governments are passed away no one should ever accede to universal empire; the civil government of the world was to be divided among separate and independent governments, and these were to differ from each other in strength and value as iron and clay differ. In this condition of State affairs a spiritual and divine kingdom, represented by the "stone cut out of the mountain without hands," was to appear, prosper, overcome all opposition, and itself become universal and perpetual. This was professedly a foretelling of future events. The king, as kings in his circumstances are wont to do, was anxiously inquiring in his own mind what was probable as to the succession of his government, who should succeed him, what state of things should subsist, "what

should come to pass hereafter." He thought of these things during his waking hours in bed, and dreamed of them when he fell asleep. The prophet assured him that He that revealeth secrets had made known to him in his dream what he was so anxious to know.

The interpretation, without which the dream itself was of no value, was, as the prophet claimed, a revelation directly from God to himself. "As for me this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living." "The wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers" can not reveal it; "but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets;" and he "maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days."

The fulfillment of this prophecy is plain and obvious to the most cursory reading of the history of the world. The Babylonian king was acknowledged as king of kings; his empire was supreme. The Medo-Persian succeeded it, was in some sense a universal empire, but was as inferior to Babylon as silver is inferior to gold. The Grecian empire succeeded it. Alexander conquered the world, but his dominion was not equal to that of the Persian king. Rome became mistress of the world; its administration was iron-like, strong, oppressive, but not delicate, refined, or beautiful; it was iron, not gold, silver, or even brass.

Since the downfall of the Roman empire, the world has had no mistress. The civil authority has been administered by independent governments.

Christianity had its commencement during the time of Augustus Cæsar ; “the stone was cut out of the mountain” while the image was still standing in the person of the Roman emperor. The smittings of the image and the enlargement of the stone toward its mountain dimensions,—that is to say, the influences of Christianity upon the governmental and other agencies of the world’s civilization, and its success, its prosperity, and its tendency toward universal prevalence and perpetuity,—have been in progress ever since the downfall of pagan Rome. The present outlook upon the affairs and occurrences of the world exhibits fair prospects of a complete fulfillment of all that the prophecy contains.

We have here, then, a prophecy uttered more than two thousand years ago. It relates to the history of the world during all these centuries. It has thus far been so accurately and definitely fulfilled that the prophecy itself seems like symbolic history. It is being daily and hourly further fulfilled, with, to the Christian believer, a certain prospect of full and final completion.

That such a prophecy is impossible to any foresight except infinite prescience seems too obvious

to require discussion. Daniel, though probably for the most of his life a courtier in the palace of Babylon's king, was a prophet of God. He wrote and "spoke as he was moved by the Holy Ghost;" and his words were not for himself and those of his time, but they minister unto us, unto whom the ends of the world are come, that we, seeing the exact fulfillment of what he declared "should come to pass," may thereby know that God has spoken unto us by him.

PROPHECIES RESPECTING THE JEWS.

The prophecy of Moses concerning the people of Israel, recorded in the twenty-sixth of Leviticus, and in the twenty-eighth of Deuteronomy, appears in the form of blessings promised on condition of obedience, and of judgments threatened in case of transgression. But in these threatenings there is a minuteness and a detail in the descriptions which evince more than a general apprehension of such calamities as usually in the providence of God fall upon transgressors. The descriptions of the curses which would visit them if they did not hearken unto the voice of the Lord their God are so circumstantial and definite that they can be regarded in no other light than that of a prophetic announcement of what would take place in their particular history. It is said: "The Lord shall bring a nation against thee from far, from the end

of the earth as swift as the eagle's flight; a nation whose tongue thou shalt not understand; a nation of fierce countenance, which shall not regard the person of the old nor shew favor to the young."

This is evidently the language of prophecy, not of legislation. It had a double fulfillment, first in the invasion by the Chaldeans, and second, by the Romans. The Romans were literally a people from far; the rapidity of their conquests resembled the flight of eagles; an eagle was the standard of their armies, and their language was entirely unknown to the Jews. It was predicted that they who were as the stars of heaven for multitude should be left few in number; that they should be driven and excluded from their own country; should be scattered among all the nations, and that they should suffer from those who led them captives, and from the persecutions of those among whom they might sojourn, the most severe inflictions, indignities, and dishonors,—all of which have been literally fulfilled in the experiences of the Jews, and are of such a nature that no human foresight could have anticipated them.

The prophecy of Isaiah respecting the return of the Jews from Babylon after seventy years of captivity, the mention of Cyrus by name, and the declaration not only that he should conquer Babylon, but also restore Israel to his native land, and rebuild Jerusalem, is an instance where the events

of history correspond so accurately and definitely with the details of the description, that opponents have no resort but to affirm that Isaiah's prophecies were written after the occurrences they describe took place.

Our Savior's predictions concerning the destruction of Jerusalem were uttered forty years before the event. To human foresight no such destruction was at that time portended. The Roman authority was supreme, the Roman power such that no small nation like the Jews would think of rebellion; the Jews under the Romans were enjoying profound peace. The invasion, the siege, the capture, the destruction of the temple and of the city, the dispersion of the people, the severity of their sufferings, all the precursors and all the sequences, all that pertained to that most terrible of calamities that ever at one time fell upon the same city, were foretold with such correctness in detail and completeness in scope, as evince that he who foretold them was endowed with such a knowledge of future events as belongs only to God.

Among the prophecies respecting the Jews, those referring to their preservation, notwithstanding and in spite of their extremities, deserve special attention and study. The Old Testament in many ways teaches that God hath not wholly cast away his people, hath not forgotten his covenant with Abraham, but hath preserved a remnant and

will preserve them for some future visitations of grace and mercy. The New Testament also affirms the same thing—"blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in; and so all Israel shall be saved, for this is my covenant unto them when I shall take away their sins."

During their history, from their exodus out of Egypt to their captivity in Babylon, they were a people strangely and strongly inclined to idolatry. Though professedly and by covenant obligation monotheists, they were almost constantly imbibing the polytheisms of surrounding nations. As a consequence they suffered the penalties pronounced in their laws and prophesied of by Moses, their prophet and lawgiver. With what seems like rare exceptions such as in the times of Solomon, they suffered the calamities of war, pestilence, famine, blight, mildew, all the various and destructive visitations to which a wayward and disobedient people under the Divine Providence are subject; and yet they survived their afflictions, overcame their difficulties, and were in many respects a people favored of the Lord. After their return from the captivity, though saved thereby from their polytheistic propensities and from their idolatries, they were nevertheless still a stiff-necked and rebellious people. God sent upon them the judgments due to their crimes, and still they multiplied and

prospered. Since the destruction of their city Jerusalem and their banishment from the land of Palestine, they have been scattered and peeled; without a country, without civil government, without an ecclesiastical establishment, without legislation, without courts of justice, without marts of trade, destitute of every thing that constitutes a nation, persecuted, despised, treated with all forms of oppression, cruelty, wrong, injustice, and indignity, they nevertheless exist in the world as a distinct people. In a word, for three thousand years they have survived against all conceivable odds; it was foretold they would so survive. What but Omnipotence could have so preserved them? and what but Omniscience could have certainly foretold that they would be so preserved? These prophecies evidence that what they say, God says, and they prove conclusively that the books in which they are found have indisputable claims to a divine authorship.

THE PROPHECIES CONCERNING CHRIST.

These with their fulfillment constitute the theme of the Sacred Scriptures from the commencement in the book of Genesis to the conclusion in the book of Revelation. Christ was the subject of the first promise in the garden, the intent and purport of all the sacrifices and services of both the patriarchal and Mosaic religions; to him gave all

the prophets witness. The Gospels present him as he that should come, as the Messiah foretold, prophesied of, and promised; the Acts and the Epistles show the connection between the prediction and its fulfillment, and the Apocalypse exhibits his triumphs and the glory which is to follow. "The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." It was prophesied that he should be of the seed of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David; that his coming should be heralded by a forerunner who should be "the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight;" that he should be born of a virgin in Bethlehem of Judea, four hundred and ninety years after the going forth of the commandment to rebuild the temple at Jerusalem, while the second temple was yet standing, and before the scepter had departed from Judah; that his childhood life should be sought, and in consequence there should be lamentations in Rama—Rachel weeping for her children and would not be comforted because they are not; that he should sojourn in Egypt and be called from thence; that he should dwell in Nazareth and be called a Nazarene; that he should be both a conquering king swaying the scepter of universal empire, and a persecuted, patient sufferer, insomuch that many interpreters of the Scripture testimony respecting him expected two Messiahs—the one answering to

the first character and the other to the second; that he should be a light to the Gentiles and a blessing to all nations; that he should purify the priesthood, sitting as a refiner and purifier of silver, and be eaten up with the zeal of the Lord's house; that he should not cry nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets, but should be meek and lowly, riding upon a colt, the foal of an ass, and yet his name should be called Wonderful, Counselor, the Prince of Peace, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father; that his soul should be an offering for sin—he should be bruised for our transgressions, the chastisement of our sins being laid upon him; that he should be numbered with transgressors—with not a bone broken he should make his grave with the rich; that he should be sold for thirty pieces of silver, and his price paid for the purchase of the potter's-field; that vinegar should be given him to drink, his raiment should be parted, and lots cast for his vesture; that God would not leave his soul in hell nor suffer his Holy One to see corruption; and that rising from the dead he should ascend up on high, leading captivity captive, and be exalted to give gifts unto men,—in a word, his whole earthly life from the manger at Bethlehem to the Mount of Ascension so far as we know it, was, with astonishing minuteness of detail, in some form foreshadowed in the ancient sacred writings.

It is manifestly impossible that the life of any one, even His, whose life has the least of what is unusual or extraordinary, could be written in advance with such accuracy, including so many particulars by an uninspired pen. But where so many particulars of peculiar and unusual character are aggregated in the life of one person, a biography written and published centuries before its subject becomes actual and real, proves conclusively a divine authorship. What the Old Testament says about Christ, God said prophetically; what the New Testament says about Christ, God says historically.

CHAPTER IV.

ARGUMENT THIRD: INTERNAL EVIDENCE

DEFINITIONS AND PRELIMINARIES.

It is common in works on Apologetics to speak of the genuineness, authenticity, and inspiration of the Holy Scriptures. Authors differ in their definitions and use of these terms. In the older and probably at present the more common use, a book is said to be genuine when it was written by the author whose name it bears, at the time when, in the place where, and under the circumstances under which it purports to have been written. It is authentic when what it affirms is true. It is inspired when its author is divinely commissioned to write it, and divinely directed, guided, assisted, or controlled in its composition. It is not unusual to address argument in support of each of these separately; and this is well, since a book may be genuine and not authentic; it may have been written by the person it claims as author, and yet its subject-matter be false. It may be authentic and yet not genuine; its general affirmations

may be true and yet claim an author not its own. It may be both genuine and authentic but not inspired.

These remarks are applicable to books in general, but in the case of the Bible its contents are such that the questions of genuineness, authenticity, and inspiration interlock and are in their nature inseparable. To prove the one is to prove the other. If the Bible be inspired, since God does not inspire men to speak falsely, of course, it is both authentic and genuine. If it be authentic, if what it says is true, it must be inspired, since it claims inspiration. If he who led Israel from Egypt, and gave them their laws, wrote the Pentateuch—that is, if the Pentateuch be genuine—then the wonders in Egypt, the passage of the sea, the guidance and protection by the pillar of fire and cloud, the sustenance by manna, all the miracles recorded in the Pentateuch were real events, since the people could not have been persuaded to accept as their civil and ecclesiastical law what was grounded on what they knew to be false,—that is, the Pentateuch is authentic; if genuine and authentic it must be inspired, since its miracles were professedly wrought to prove that Moses was divinely commissioned to do what he did, and to teach what he taught. For these reasons the thread of thought in a discussion of the Christian evidences may take the direction of

answers to the one question: Are there reasons for believing that what the Bible says, God says?

Evidences are sometimes classified as external, internal, and collateral. The first are so called because they are regarded as external to the Book itself. These are miracles and prophecies. The second or internal evidences are so called because they are found in the Book. They consist of considerations which tend to show that the doctrines taught in the Bible are consistent with the character of God, and are promotive of the virtue and happiness of man. The third or collateral evidences seem to be so classified as a matter of convenience, furnishing a class to which may be referred several minor matters not properly belonging to the others, and yet of sufficient importance to deserve attention. The more important evidences of this class are the marvelous diffusions of Christianity during the first three centuries, and the actual beneficial effects of Christianity upon mankind.

Evidences are again divided into two classes, rational and authenticating. These may be distinguished most readily by observing the point to be proved. Rational evidence is that which is adduced to show that the doctrine taught is true. It consists of those considerations in the light of which we are induced to believe in the truth of the proposition discussed.

Authenticating evidence is adduced to prove that the teacher is divinely commissioned. It may have no natural connection with the doctrine taught, may be foreign to it. Rational evidence shows reasons why the proposition is true, or why it must be true. Authenticating evidence shows reasons why we should believe it is true.

This distinction may be of service in the discussion of modern rationalism. This issue affirms that a rational being can not be required to believe any doctrine or to practice any precept, unless he has good reason for so doing, which affirmation may be readily accepted as a moral axiom. The error of the rationalists consists in this, that they always demand rational evidences for belief or practice; they require to see why the thing is; arguments adduced to show why *they should believe* that the thing is, are rejected as irrelevant.

Now, it is evident that there may be good and valid reasons for believing that a proposition is true when the believer is totally unable to see any reason why it should be true. The testimony of credible witnesses, affirming that at a given time and place there was an eclipse of the sun, is a valid reason for belief that the eclipse occurred, though not being an astronomer the believer has no means of knowing why it should occur. The calculations of the astronomer are rational evidences;

the testimony of the witnesses is received on assurances of their credibility. If the case require that their credibility be established by miraculous occurrences, and miracles are actually wrought, then those miraculous occurrences are authenticating evidences, and are adequate reasons why the testimony of the witnesses should be received. It may be believed on rational evidence such as the marks of design every-where manifest in nature's works, that the First Cause is intelligent. The affirmation that God has a Son can never be established on evidence of that kind; since, though such evidence may be existent, man is incompetent to apprehend it. And yet, if God send a messenger, and authenticate his mission by demonstrations evidently divine, to teach the doctrine of a divine Sonship, this authenticating evidence is an adequate ground for belief in the doctrine taught.

The topics of discussion in Systematic Divinity are sometimes divided into two divisions, the one called Natural Religion and the other Revealed Religion.

The term natural religion is ambiguous. It is sometimes used to designate that system of morals and religion, or those moral and religious truths, which the unaided reason of man is competent to discover by the light of nature and providence.

At other times it is used to designate that system of morals and religion which comprises all those moral and religious truths, whose rational evidence being adequate, the human mind is competent to apprehend.

The first of these definitions we think, for the following reasons, should be laid aside as useless. First, it has been through all the ages and still is the source of a fruitless controversy. On the one hand, it is said that it may be reasonably doubted whether there is any such thing as natural religion, whether, indeed, that idea fundamental to all religion, the idea of God, in even its most embryonic state, was ever in any case purely a discovery by natural means. It is affirmed that history does not furnish any instance wherein any individual family, tribe, or nation, known to be destitute of all knowledge of morals and religion at the start, have of their own motion, without aid or instruction from others, arisen from barbarism to civilization.

On the other hand, it is contended that the idea of God is a necessary and natural intuition, necessarily underlying all mental processes, and of course present to thought, antecedent to all processes of investigation; that upon this foundation the unaided reason may build a superstructure of ethics and religion adequate to all the purposes of the present life; that in the days of Socrates

and Plato, Grecian philosophy realized from resources wholly natural the blessings and benefits of a pure theism, even high culture and the refinements of a distinguished civilization. Between these extremes controversialists have ranged through the entire field of argument, and as yet no beneficial result is apparent—the parties are no nearer agreement than at the first, and no valuable truth has been determined by the contest.

Second, the definition in question should be laid aside, because the end sought to be secured on the part of the believer in revelation may be attained without it. The reason why a naturalist in religion affirms the ability of the human reason to discover and construct an adequate system of religion is, that he may therefore affirm the antecedent improbability of a revelation; and the reason why a supernaturalist denies this competency is, that he may show the necessity of a revelation and the consequent antecedent probability that such a revelation has been given. Now even if the latter should end this controversy respecting man's ability, by conceding that a pure theism is conceivably a possible attainment to the natural man by merely natural means, yet all the arguments usually adduced in treatises on ethics and religion to prove the necessity of a revelation from the defects of natural religion are valid for the purpose for which they are adduced, because

whatever man might be, he never was, and it is reasonable to infer he never will be, such, but that a revelation is indispensable to his highest good.

Third, this definition should be laid aside, because the question of man's natural ability to discover religious truths, whatever it might have been in past times, is in our day wholly nugatory. To the present generation of readers and thinkers, with a knowledge of many religions, religions that have a history extending over thousands of years; taught this knowledge earlier than they can remember; interested in it through all the days of their earthly life; called to its investigation by all the sources of daily experience and compelled to cognize it as integral in all the contents of consciousness, it is idle to inquire how much of this they might have discovered had they commenced investigation in entire destitution, and prosecuted research without aid.

For these reasons we reject the first of the two definitions mentioned, and adopt the second, namely: natural religion is a system of religion comprising all those moral and religious truths, whose rational evidence being adequate, the human mind is competent to apprehend. With this definition the terms natural religion and revealed religion constitute an exhaustive category to which all known moral and religious truths may be referred, and the distinction between rational and

authenticating evidence forms a basis of classification distinct and intelligible.

The truths of natural religion are believed, because the believer apprehends that which demonstrates they must be truths; for example, he believes in God because he cognizes in consciousness the existence of cause, the necessity of first cause, and that first cause must be self-existent, eternal, infinite, and intelligent. This is rational evidence; he sees why it must be true that God exists.

The truths of revealed religion are believed, because the believer receives the testimony of a witness authenticated by indubitable proofs as a teacher sent from God. He believes what is affirmed because such a teacher affirms it, not because he sees reasons why what is affirmed must be true. This is authenticating evidence.

To the category of natural religion belong the doctrines of the being and attributes of God, moral distinctions, the free agency, moral responsibility, and immortality of man, the fact of sin and need of salvation, probation in the life that now is, and retribution in the life to come.

To the category of revealed religion belong the doctrines of the trinity, divinity of Christ, the hypostatic union, the personality and divinity of the Holy Ghost, the atonement, justification by faith only, supernatural agency in the regeneration

and sanctification of the believer, the witness of the Spirit to adoption and heirship, and the resurrection of the dead.

There is one other classification of Christian evidences not yet mentioned. The arguments showing the necessity of a revelation and the consequent antecedent probability that a revelation has been or will be given are called *presumptive*. Miracles and prophecies, the external evidences, are called *direct*; and the internal and collateral, *indirect*. These distinctions are unimportant, and are serviceable chiefly as they contribute to variety in the forms of speech and writing.

From these definitions and preliminary observations, it is obvious that the arguments from miracles and prophecy are of indispensable value to the Christian system, since they constitute the authenticating evidences on which are grounded all beliefs in the doctrines placed in the category of revealed religion. Whatever distinguishes Christianity from pure theism has its basis here. Faith in the trinity and its cognate doctrines must be founded on an unquestionable "thus saith the Lord," or it is a mere superstition. It is also obvious that much of Bible instruction may be shown to be true independent of the miraculous and the supernatural. The doctrines placed in the category of natural religion may be fully sustained by rational evidences. It may be further remarked, that a

proper presentation of this class of evidences will avail not only to show that those doctrines of the Holy Scriptures on which they have a bearing are true, but also that natural religion is taught in the Bible with a perspicuity and strength of statement, a beauty of illustration and persuasiveness of motive that so far transcend all other treatises on these subjects, as to constitute it, for this reason "the book of books." Yea, more, it may be affirmed that many portions of the Holy Word so far transcend all the products of human genius and talent, that a clear apprehension of their import is all that is requisite to convince the reader that their authors were divinely inspired. The consideration of these evidences called sometimes internal, sometimes rational, constituting argument third, next demands attention.

INTERNAL EVIDENCE.

I. Certain Bible doctrines are of the nature of intuitive truths.

1. The Bible, wherever it directly asserts or makes indirect reference to the subject, refers the existence, preservation, and phenomena of the universe to an intelligent person as first cause of all that is: to God, first and last, beginning and end, infinite in all possible perfections. In so doing it sets forth a doctrine that needs no proof; a doctrine evident in itself. It is not needful, in this

connection, to affirm that the idea of God is intuitive, that it is a first truth, necessary and universal; whether it be so or not is reserved for discussion in another place under the head of theology proper. All that is here insisted upon is, that when by the Word of God, or by any means, this idea of first cause, and of intelligence and will in the first cause—this idea of a personal creator, upholder, and governor of the universe—is presented to thought, is clearly apprehended, the mind at once, without demanding proof, without waiting for argument or feeling the need of any, with greater or less confidence accepts it as true. It is not said that doubt is impossible—any man may indulge in doubts on any subject; the validity of perception and consciousness has been doubted; a man may doubt till doubt becomes damnation. Nor is it said that in accepting the doctrines of the Divine Being and attributes, the human mind has no difficulties. Any man can ask a thousand questions concerning the infinite, that neither he nor any other man can answer; but it is affirmed and insisted upon as beyond reasonable question that, the idea of God being presented, every man so far accepts it that he can not confidently believe the opposite. “The fool,” the depraved wicked man, may “in his heart” say “no God;” that is, he may wish there were none; but even he can not in his own intellect confidently affirm that there is none.

The natural theology of the Bible—the science of the Bible as to the being of God—then, is such that it is intuitively accepted as truthful; and more than this, the Biblical theology so far transcends all other treatises, philosophies, discussions, respecting the Divine Being, that its very style or manner of treatment, its perspicuity and strength of statement, its beauty and sublimity of thought, evinces the authorship or inspiration of him who only can know God to perfection.

2. Again, the Bible every-where postulates a distinction between right and wrong, and in so doing it does what lies outside the limits of legitimate discussion. The human mind naturally cognizes the actions of intelligent beings as wise or unwise, discreet or indiscreet, expedient or inexpedient, courteous or impolite, profitable or unprofitable, graceful or awkward; and it as naturally and necessarily regards those actions as right or wrong, holy or unholy, meritorious or censurable, rewardable or punishable. Moreover, whatever the Bible commends as right or condemns as wrong, is so commended or condemned by the universal judgment. Not one instance can be found in all the Word of God, where an action is clearly approved that will not be also approved by every man whose judgment in such a case is at all deserving of consideration; and in every instance where an action is condemned as wrong the judgment

of mankind will approve such condemnation. If the ethics of the Bible be compared with what philosophers have written on the subject of morals; if in these respects Solomon, St. Paul, and Jesus Christ be placed in antithesis with Plato, Seneca, and Socrates; if, on the one hand, we observe the distinctness of outline with which duty is portrayed, delineated so plainly that "the way-faring man, though a fool, need not err," expressed so boldly and conspicuously that "he that runneth may read;" if we observe the applicability of these precepts to all the varying and diversified circumstances and conditions of human life to the extent that "the man of God is hereby thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work;" if we observe the solemn sanctions by which moral obligations are sustained, the indisputable assurance that "whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap—he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, and he that soweth to the spirit shall of the spirit reap everlasting life;" and, on the other hand, if we take into account the metaphysical hair-splitting, the unintelligible philosophizing every-where prevalent in the discussion—the doubts, difficulties, and uncertainties always mingling in the conclusions, and especially the utter absence of any appreciable motives sanctioning obligations imposed—we can not fail to see in the ethics of the Scripture such

a superiority to whatever mere human genius has ever attained, as evinces a proclamation of duty from the Source of obligation. The commandments of the holy writings come to us with a clearness of apprehension, and extent of application and a solemnity of sanction, that must unmistakably evidence to us a "thus saith the Lord." Very evidently what the Bible says to us about our duties, God says.

3. Among the Bible doctrines having characteristics of intuitive truths, may be reckoned not only the being and attributes of God and moral distinctions, but also the moral agency and consequent responsibility of man. The Bible affirms that man was made in the image of God; that this image consists of, first, spirituality—man is not wholly material; he is in part spirit: second, intellectuality—he is capable of knowing, judging, inferring, imagining: third, sensibility—he is capable of pleasure and pain, desire and affection: and lastly, volitionality—he has the power of choice, and is within limits a first cause, is endowed with executive efficiency, or, in other words, the human will is an alternative power; is capable of making a selection of one from several different things or courses of conduct; it is also an executive power, is capable of putting forth a mental *nisus* which is causal to muscular movements. The system of morals and religion taught in the Bible, in all its

parts and in its whole, teaches or implies, or both, that because of this endowment of free will, because of this feature of the divine image in which man was created, because of this characteristic of the human constitution, man is held responsible to his Maker for his conduct. Every "thou shalt" and "thou shalt not" recorded in the Bible implies this; without this the thundering voices and the flashing lightnings of Mount Sinai have no meaning, the threatened judgments of woe and eternal death have in them nothing fearful. The agony of Gethsemane, the cross and passion of Calvary have no relation to human conduct, character or destiny. But this truth is heard in those voices, and seen in those fires of the mountain. It imparts a commanding eloquence to every requirement, and a persuasive motive to promised blessings or threatened judgments. It connects the prayer "if possible let this cup pass," and "the bloody sweat" of the garden, the "Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani" of the cross, with the relations of the race to the government of God and with the hopes and destinies of all men for the world that is without end. What is thus set forth with such clearness and prominence as of such vast and momentous importance, is recognized in universal consciousness as a truth not requiring argument, not to be determined by discussion. Though this fundamental thought when carried into the

processes of psychological investigation is inseparably connected with the difficult problems of foreknowledge and fate, though every one finds herein problems for whose solution he is incompetent, and though concerning the whole subject every one finds it not difficult to entertain doubts, yet no man can confidently believe the opposite. When he proposes to himself the proposition that man is a free agent and therefore responsible for his conduct, he may doubt and be perplexed, but he can not believe that man is a machine, acting only as he is acted upon, and therefore neither blamable nor praiseworthy. The Bible doctrine of human responsibility has this element of an intuitive truth, that it can not be successfully contradicted.

This truth, then, because it is a truth, will be received by the reader of the Bible independent of all questions as to where, when, or by whom the Bible was written, as to whether it was or was not divinely inspired. But the attention of the reader may be further directed, to the manner in which this doctrine of human responsibility is treated of in the Holy Word. Do not the distinct limitations of law herein delineated, the exact measure of obligation and responsibility herein meted out, the even balance of the scales of justice herein suspended, the righteousness of the legislation, the unprejudiced impartiality of the adjudication, the rigorous efficiency of the execution,

clearly evince that the law, the jurisprudence and the execution proceed from the infinite Lawgiver? Do not the precise estimate of human capacities, the extenuations for human weaknesses and disabilities, and the cognizance of man's manifold and multiform relations, also plainly evince that this code of laws was framed and adjusted by Him who only knows what is in man, and by that Omniscience which only is competent to anticipate man's ever varying circumstances and consequent responsibilities? These certainly, if not conclusive arguments, are intimations not unimportant that what the Bible says of man's responsibilities, God says.

4. The fourth intuitive doctrine to be mentioned in this connection, every-where either expressed or implied in the Sacred Writings, is that of man's immortality. This, like the doctrines just above alluded to, is nowhere in the Sacred Volume made a topic of direct discussion; it is postulated, assumed, taken for granted. In the Old Testament the benefits and blessings accruing to man in this life from obedience to God are so numerous and so prominently mentioned, that to cursory observation the life to come seems not taken into account, and some have even said that the doctrine of man's immortality is not there, and was not held by the Old Testament saints. But the existence of a sect called the Sadducees, whose distinguishing characteristic was the denial of

angels, spirits, and the resurrection of the dead; their special antagonism to the Pharisees on this latter topic, and the fact that they were few in number, the mass of the people being in harmony with the Pharisaic creed, proves that the belief of immortality was the prevalent belief, and that it was received from their fathers as one of the admitted doctrines of the Jewish religion. But whatever may be said of the Old Testament, in the New the doctrines of immortality and eternal life are brought to light with great distinctness and brilliancy, and the Old, interpreted by the New, bears ample testimony to like precious faith. If the idea of man's immortality be eliminated, the Bible becomes an unmeaning book.

Materialists deny, deists doubt, and rationalists reason as though the future were not a certainty. But the denial is vain, the doubt is baseless, and the reasoning useless; for all men, materialists, deists, and rationalists themselves included, so far cognize immortality as intuitive, that they can not satisfy themselves that death is the terminus of human existence. No man can confidently say to himself, death is the end of me. If annihilation ever take place, or if ever consciousness die, it will be a judgment or penalty inflicted upon him who has proved himself unworthy of an immortality to which he had been invited. The image of God, in which man was created, includes among its features the

possibility of unending existence. This truth needs only illustration and enforcement, the conviction that it is a truth does not depend either upon argument or authority. The ancient philosophers indeed discoursed of man's future argumentatively. They seemed to conceive that whether there be an hereafter was to be determined by reasoning. But their arguments of this kind were sophisms. They were so of necessity, for no conviction of the human mind is more simple, elementary, better known than this; as a logician would say, there is no middle term with which the ideas of man and immortality may be so compared as to construct a conclusive argument. The Bible then in postulating an hereafter for the human race does what universal conviction sustains, and its testimony on this subject may be admitted on rational grounds. Its superiority in this regard over all other discussions is manifest in several particulars, chiefly in this, that it teaches by facts. Human ears are made to hear angel voices singing "Glory to God in the highest; peace on earth, and good will to men." Human eyes see angel forms. The spiritual is made manifest to sense. Moses and Elijah return from the country that is very far away, and are seen and heard by mortal men. Above all, God himself comes from out his own eternity in the person of his Son, and for three and thirty years illustrates the godlike in all the circumstances

of man's earthly life. As a consequence of such illustrative evidences of the spirit world and man's relation to it, there are a clearness of apprehension and a conviction of certainty not attainable by any other means. "We *know* that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved we have a building of God, a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens."

Eternity to finite thought is an unfathomable void; here are heights without a summit, depths without a bottom, lengths and breadths without limits of extension. Would mere human philosophy ascend these heights? She soars at best but on conjecture's trembling wing; doubt, uncertainty, or despair are the results of her inquiries. Christianity, on the other hand, crosses death's narrow isthmus with firm and undaunted steps; over a pathway of glory she ascends to the summit of everlasting hills, and gazes with open vision upon, to her, a real scene of sublimity and beauty, without a cloud to dim, or limit to obstruct, the sight. A clearness of apprehension, a certainty of conviction, transcendently superior to all that human science furnishes, so universally characterizes the Christian's faith in the hereafter, that we do not hesitate to affirm that he has been with and learned of Him who only hath immortality. The Scripture testimony concerning the life to come commends itself not only as deserving of confidence on

rational grounds, but also as so eminently superior to human wisdom as to evince that the teachers whose testimony it is are teachers sent from God.

5. The fifth doctrine, and last to be mentioned in this connection, having intuitive characteristics and every-where assumed in the Scriptures, is that this life is a life of probation, and the one to come a life of retribution. Of moral accountability as a necessary and natural outgrowth of conscious free-will, and of immortality, we have already spoken. If to these convictions an adequate apprehension of the mixed condition of human life and the unequal distribution of providential blessings be added, it is not easy to see how an expectation of a future adjustment is avoidable. That the condition of human life is a mixed one—not a condition wholly good or wholly bad, not a condition of reward nor yet of punishment where the conceivably possible never becomes actual and yet the attainable is ever unlimited—in a word, that the present condition is such a one as we should expect infinite wisdom would adopt for the trial of newly created intelligences must be readily admitted. That the capabilities, opportunities, possibilities of men in this life differ one from another through a very extended scale of differences, from a condition hardly distinguishable from a mere brute existence to endowments and attainments that seem almost divine, will be also admitted without question.

How such diversities of experience are to be harmonized with the impartiality of our Heavenly Father is not at all manifest if this life be the whole of human existence, or if the future life is in no way connected with the life that now is. But accountability extended into the immortal state furnishes scope and opportunity for the adjustment of providential differences; and when these thoughts occur in connection, the doctrine of a future retribution dependent upon and determined by the histories of the present life, commends itself as eminently rational. Such a view is further sustained by the analogies of experience. Childhood is determinative of youth, and youth of manhood, and manhood of old age; men live more for the future than for the present; it is the expectation of future good that inspires all the enterprises of life; it is hope of future relief from present misery that keeps the heart whole during the sufferings of our earthly sorrows. Time probationary, eternity retributive, seems inscribed upon all we see in our earthly pilgrimage; it is the lesson of daily experience and the solution of life's mysteries. All do not believe it, but none can confidently disbelieve. To affirm that the future of a vicious man will be the same as though he had been virtuous is as impossible as to affirm that he will have no future; or to affirm that the virtue of a good man will be of no advantage to him in the far off of the

beyond is as impossible as to affirm that vice is virtue, or that there is no difference between them. But however clear it may be in the light of thought that expectations of a future adjustment are well founded, yet this doctrine has its difficulties. As concerning God, moral distinctions, free-will, personal responsibility, and immortality, any man may propose to himself unanswerable questions, so concerning this, any one may suffer perplexity and indulge in doubt. What is here insisted upon is that all men in some sense, to some degree, accept the present life as a probation for the life to come, and in so doing they accept the teachings of the Scriptures on that subject. As above, it is also further insisted upon that the connection between the histories of time and the retributions of eternity as shown in the Word of God is of such a nature as evinces a revelation from Him who established that connection, and who only sees the end from the beginning. In our Lord's description of the judgment scene, when the Son of man shall come in the clouds of heaven and sit upon the throne of his glory and all nations shall be gathered before him; in his parable of the talents; in what he says of cutting off an offending right hand and of plucking out an offending right eye, since it is better to enter into life halt or blind than having two hands or two eyes to be cast into outer darkness where there is weeping,

wailing, and gnashing of teeth; in his assurance that godliness is profitable, unto all things; and again, when he says, what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world and lose his own soul? in all our Lord said—indeed in all that is said in the Book of God about eternal interests—there is an ease of manner indicative of familiarity, complete knowledge, and unhesitating certainty; a sort of panoramic view of two worlds, showing the vanity of the one and the glory of the other; a balance of two opposite eternities, a comprehension of God's claims and man's obligations such as must be divine—so manifestly so that if this gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost. A mind unable to cognize a divine inspiration in the teachings of the Scriptures concerning the relations of the life that now is with that which is to come, teachings which are to our vision a rainbow of hope spanning the dark cloud of our future prospects, or a glorious shining forth of the light of knowledge upon the darkness of our ignorance from the regions of truth and certainty, must be of those whom, choosing darkness rather than light, the god of this world hath blinded, lest the light of the glorious Gospel should shine unto them.

Having thus enumerated several of the fundamental doctrines of religion assumed, illustrated, and enforced in the holy writings—doctrines which commend themselves to thought without argument

on mere announcement, independent of authorities and authenticating evidences, having characteristics of intuitive truths—attention is called to a second class of Scripture doctrines which, when properly considered, are of the nature of internal evidences.

II. Several prominent doctrines of the Bible are statements of obvious facts—facts in the condition and character of man, which are so many wants or necessities of his nature requiring supplies, remedies, reliefs. Correlated to these facts of want and requirement are several other doctrines which are statements of sole and adequate supplies for those wants, remedies for those diseases.

I. First, let the fact of sin—its universality, the guilt or obligation to punishment imposed by sin upon the transgressor, the consequent exposure of the whole human race to the penalties of sin constituting in the character and condition of man a known and felt need of pardon; and correlative to this fact of sin and need of pardon let the doctrine of atonement, an adequate and sole remedy for that known and felt necessity, be considered.

The fact of sin and its universality is sufficiently indicated in the Bible by such passages as these: “No man liveth and sinneth not; if we say we have no sin, or that we have not sinned, we

deceive ourselves and make God a liar." "All we like sheep have gone astray." "They have done abominable works; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." Corresponding with these declarations, the universal verdict of mankind, each with respect to himself and his neighbor and all his race, is that in some respects, to some extent, some more and some less, all mankind are sinners. Doubtless our judgments are in this respect, as in others, imperfect, and oftentimes at fault. Some men censure themselves for what they could not avoid; some entertain an opinion respecting the general conduct and character of mankind that estimates men worse than they really are; others think more highly of men than they ought to think; but all are agreed that all are sinners. The only exception is the atheistic fatalist, who, without doubt, entertains his fatalistic notions in opposition to, and in spite of, a strong conviction to the contrary. What, then, is affirmed in Scripture of the wickedness and guilt of men before God is but the statement of a well-known and universally recognized fact.

That sin exposes the transgressor to penalty is implied in the idea of sin; it is a transgression of law; law without penalty is no law—mere precept, advice; guilt is obligation to punishment; all mankind, therefore, are criminals before the law, under

sentence, waiting execution; in other words, the fact of universal wickedness constitutes a condition of need, want, requirement—man as a sinner under sentence of the law needs pardon. What therefore is found in Scripture proffering pardon, remission of sins, non-imputation of guilt, forgiveness, imputation of righteousness, justification (the idea is the same by whatever term it is designated, it is the chief magistrate ordering the non-execution of penalty), is but a proffered remedy for a well-known and deeply felt necessity of man's condition as a sinner. As the hungry require food, the sick health, the blind sight, the ignorant knowledge, so do sinners require pardon. Correlative to this statement of the fact of universal guilt and of consequent universal requirement of pardon, the Bible reveals in its doctrine of *atonement* a provided remedy. That this remedy, if real, is adequate, will not be questioned. If it be admitted that the testimony concerning Jesus Christ is true—that he is the Son of God, God manifest in the flesh, Deity incarnate—it will not then be questioned whether he be able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him. The atonement, then, is an adequate supply for a really existing want, and so far forth commends itself to the interested attention of mankind.

Again, we affirm that it is a *sole* remedy—
“Jesus Christ is the only name given under heaven

among men, whereby we must be saved." All that has been said above respecting the incompetency of natural religion to furnish assurances of pardon is applicable here, and may be referred to, but need not be repeated. If the atonement of the Scriptures be not the divinely provided remedy for the evils of sin, then we aver man has no knowledge of any adequate remedy; life is an inexplicable mystery, and death a leap into darkness. By so much, then, as sin is an acknowledged fact, pardon a requisite indispensable to peace, happiness, and well-being, and atonement an adequate and sole provision for pardon and salvation, by so much do the Scriptures commend themselves to acceptance as the truth of God.

2. Next we turn to consider the doctrine of depravity—sin in character—its universality, and the correlated doctrine of regeneration. Scripture testimony here is explicit. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked." "The carnal mind is enmity against God, it is not subject to his law, nor indeed can be." "We all are as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags, and we all do fade as a leaf, and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." "The flesh lusteth against the spirit and the spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye can not do the things ye would." "Behold I was shapen in iniquity,

and in sin did my mother conceive me.” “The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies.”

The common sense of mankind refers the universal prevalence of wickedness and crime to a universal depravity; sin in conduct is referred to sin in character as its source. Consciousness confirms this reference; all men feel that their evil deeds, their remissness in duty, proceed from moral defects in their constitution; every one knows not only that he does wrong, thinks wrong, speaks wrong, but also that he *is* wrong. This moral depravity of our nature is regarded by every thoughtful mind as *the* great bar to happiness here and to good prospects in the hereafter. The great want, then, of our common humanity is some regenerating agency that shall create us anew. “Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?”

The Bible doctrine of depravity and the consequent need of a new creation is, then, a statement of a well-known and acknowledged fact and a clearly recognized want of our common nature; and the correlated doctrine of regeneration is an adequate and sole provision for that felt and acknowledged necessity. The statement of the facts needs no authentication—whether a divine, a supernatural agency is ever given, or will be given to regenerate mankind; if given, under what circum-

stances, on what conditions, is matter of revelation—knowledge on that subject must depend upon testimony; testimony claiming divine authority must be authenticated by divine works. The doctrine of regeneration, as the above doctrine of atonement, belongs to the category of revealed religion; it can not be determined conclusively by rational evidences; and yet, standing related to so vast, so momentous a want of human nature, being the only adequate supply for that most tremendous necessity known to human thought, it is not unreasonable to suppose it true; and the book that proposes to inform mankind fully and satisfactorily concerning it, certainly has claims on its own account to a candid and interested attention; yea, more, our thought is that this perfect adjustment and adaptation to the nature and condition of mankind is a strong intimation of the divinity of the book itself. The teachings of the Scripture on the fact of sin and the way of salvation are in themselves so perfectly in harmony with what we know, and so perfectly represent what we want, that their divine authorship seems stamped upon their every thought and word. Surely, what the Bible says on these subjects, God says.

3. Again, man is ignorant, and requires knowledge; weak, and requires strength; a child of sorrow, and needs comfort. Correlated to these facts and wants is the Bible doctrine of a divine Spirit,

who is a teacher, supernaturally enlightening the eyes of the understanding, solving doubts, leading into all needful truth; who is a Spirit of grace, strengthening feeble purposes, giving energy to inefficient wills, establishing the double-minded in stable ways, being in all life's experiences a grace sufficient for the resistance of temptation and the discharge of duty; who is a comforter, specially to heirs of salvation, charged with messages of mercies, inspirations of consolation, encouragements to hope—his presence and communion itself a joy unspeakably great and full of glory.

4. Again, man is mortal and requires immortality. This conviction that the soul will live in a future state of being partly satisfies his anxiety when he inquires, If a man die shall he live again? But he has instinctive interests in the body he inhabits; it is dust doomed to return to dust whence it came. To be assured that it shall live again satisfies an instinctive desire. The correlated doctrine of a resurrection of the body is the sole assurance man has that he shall ever realize what he so much desires. Is it questioned whether man has such an instinctive interest in the destiny of his physical nature as that the idea of a resurrection is in any way correlated to a felt want of our common humanity, it may be a sufficient reply to appeal to the consciousness of the inquirer himself. Is he not conscious of such an interest? can

he divest himself of it? if he can, does he want to? Further, let the interest of mankind in burial places, cemeteries, mausoleums, be accounted for on any other theory. But be this as it may, to him who hears the voice of Jesus saying, "I am the resurrection and the life; whosoever believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live," that voice is a voice divine, effectually expelling the darkness of the tomb and lighting up the future of his whole being, body as well as soul, with the light of a divine joy; and the volume that assures him of such a resurrection is not therefore antecedently judged to be of men, but rather a book given by inspiration of God.

In this examination of the Bible itself, we have endeavored to show that many of the doctrines it teaches are such as of themselves, independent of extraneous argument, will be judged to be true by the common sense of mankind; and, moreover, that the truth is so presented, connected and related, that at the same time it will be judged that this presentation of truth is by divine aid. One class of these doctrines has been presented as having characteristics of intuitive truths. They are the divine existence, moral distinctions, the free agency, responsibility, and immortality of man, probation in this life and retribution in the life to come. Another class adduced has been presented as statements of facts, facts of needs, wants,

requirements in the conduct, the character, and the condition of man with reference to correlated provisions for these requirements and necessities. These are: (1.) The fact of sin in conduct, the consequent need of pardon and the correlated provision of atonement; (2.) the fact of sin in character, the consequent need of regeneration, and the correlated provision of a supernatural, sanctifying agency; and (3.) the facts of ignorance, weakness, and sorrow, the consequent corresponding necessities and the correlated offices of the Holy Spirit, instructing, strengthening, and comforting believers.

We come now to consider a third class of Scriptures, which, though more naturally classed with those requiring authenticating evidence, nevertheless are such as may be properly referred to under the head of internal evidences.

III. The outline historical events recorded in the Bible are such as carry with them *prima facie* evidence of their own authenticity. This has been so fully shown under the head of miracles that but little needs to be said in this connection. The genealogy of the Jewish nation from Abraham their founder downward; the primal residence in Palestine, the emigration into Egypt in the time of Jacob, the prosperity under Joseph, the subsequent reduction to a condition of servitude and sorrow, the exodus under the leadership of Moses; the preservation, protection, and guidance in and

through the wilderness, with the wonderful and miraculous events attending, the conquest of Canaan, and the division and settlements of the lands of Palestine; the wars offensive and defensive, occurring through years of well-known historic record; the ecclesiastical history, the prophetic ministration, the captivity in and return from Babylon; the four centuries of uniform religious history during which there was neither sign, vision, nor voice of the prophet, the fathers having fallen asleep, and all things continuing as they were; the awakening by John the Baptist, the life of Christ and the acts of the apostles—are all outline prominent events in the national history of a people now existent, and older than any other known to history, and a people whose international relations are and ever have been such that their real history could not be unknown, much less could a false and fictitious history supplant the one real and true.

If, now, we take into account these three classes of Scriptures, (1.) those having intuitive characteristics; (2.) those statements of facts and requirements in man's conduct, character, and condition with those references to sole and adequate provisions for man's necessities, and (3.) those outline prominent events of well-known history, it is obvious, on a moment's reflection, that we have before us well-nigh the entire contents of the Book. If again, we observe the inseparable

connection subsisting between these fundamental intuitive truths, obvious facts and outline historic events, and the remaining portions of the volume, we can not fail to see that the argument from internal evidence alone strongly supports the proposition that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God. To this let us add under the same head of internal evidence a fourth consideration.

IV. The language, the literature, the allusions to customs, to contemporary events, topographical descriptions, the biographical sketches, all that the Bible contains of the nature of circumstantial evidences, are precisely such as its history and its claims require. The full development of this thought would require volumes, a complete appreciation of the conclusiveness of the argument would require much learning; a few illustrative instances obvious to common intelligence must suffice. The Hebrew ceased to be a living language soon after the captivity in Babylon; hence, all books written in pure Hebrew must have been composed at, about, or before the time of that event—precisely what the genuineness and authenticity of the Hebrew Scriptures require. Again, the Hebrew and all languages change from time to time, so that writers of one age differ greatly from those of another; as no one living in the days of Demosthenes could have written as Homer did, so was it impossible for Malachi or David to

write as did Moses. The different styles of the several books conform precisely to what they would be if, as claimed for them, they were composed at different times by authors living in ages different and distant from each other. It is evident from the style and character of the language of the Pentateuch, that no man living much later than Moses could have written it, and also from that of the Prophecy of Malachi, that it could not have been written much earlier than it claims to have been written. The style and characteristics of the Psalms of David correspond with the peculiarities of David's mind and the times in which David lived. The same is true of the Prophecy of Isaiah, and in fine of all the ancient Scriptures. The New Testament was written in Greek, not the classic Greek of Plato and Aristotle, but the common dialect in most prevalent use in time proximately succeeding the establishment of the Macedonian Empire, and this dialect, called the Hellenic, is in the New Testament frequently intermixed with Hebraisms. That is, the language of the New Testament is precisely such as persons of common literary attainments, of a Hebraistic descent and education, writing in the times of Augustus Cæsar for the religious instruction of the common people of all the nations would be expected to employ; it is precisely the language and style which such men as Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, Peter,

James, and Paul, educated as they were, living in the times in which they lived, writing on the subjects on which they wrote and for the readers for whom their works were intended, would naturally adopt as being most convenient for themselves and most suitable for their purpose.

The allusions to the administration of civil affairs are numerous, remarkably accurate, and forcibly demonstrative of the genuineness and authenticity of the New Testament. Palestine was not brought under the Roman yoke by conquest, but by the consent and assistance of a large party of its citizens. As a consequence, it enjoyed for a time a species of semi-independence, and jurisdiction was divided between the chief priests with the elders and the Roman viceroys; as, in the case of our Lord, the chief priests and elders tried him, found him guilty of blasphemy, and declared that according to Jewish law death was the penalty due to his crime. But they had no authority to inflict capital punishment, hence their appeal to Pilate. He, on the judgment of the Sanhedrim, gave orders for the execution.

In many other respects, such as the census, the taxation, the military force, there was a co-existence of the Roman and the Jewish practices, curiously complicated and entirely anomalous.

Again, there were very frequent changes in the officials of the government—seventeen different

officers are incidentally alluded to by name in the New Testament. These officers were some of them Jews, some Romans, and some Greeks. There were several Herods, and to cursory reading the references to them seem confused. Now, this state of things came to an end within forty years after the death of Christ. Incidental allusions in the histories of other matters, in biographical sketches, and in epistolary writings, to such a confused condition of the civil administration could not, by possibility, be accurate and truthful, if the writings in which those allusions appear were forgeries, or if they were written at any very long time subsequent to the time of the events referred to, and to the time of the lives and administrations of the princes whose names are mentioned. In a word, correctness and accuracy are an impossible achievement in such a case except to a contemporary writer. If the references and allusions of the New Testament to the officers and administration of the civil government be found truthful in accordance with the facts of actual history, then is the New Testament itself a real history, written by the authors whose names it bears, at the time when it claims to have been written, and the events it records took place as it affirms they did—the book is genuine, authentic, and credible, and therefore inspired. In reference to the correctness of these allusions, it is sufficient

to say that criticism never more severe—criticism in the hands both of enemies and of friends than whom none were ever more learned—criticism continued through centuries—has done on this very question its very best, and as yet no case of unquestionable error has appeared—no case of obscure or doubtful reference, inconsistent with the perfect integrity and credibility of the sacred writers, has been shown. On the contrary, the testimony of contemporary writers, especially of Josephus, is in many cases confirmatory, never clearly antagonistic. Allusions to other matters—as to the private and public character of men in power, to the religious, ecclesiastical, and political prejudices of the people, the dispersed condition of the Jews, the existence of synagogues frequently built by river-sides in nearly all the heathen cities visited by the apostles—in fine, all the references, to whatever subject they are made, are found to be in accordance with, and are never contradicted by what is found on the same subjects in contemporary histories.

A case of special interest, and lucidly demonstrative of the Christian faith, is the account given in the Acts of the Apostles of the travels of St. Paul through Asia Minor and Greece, and of his labors, persecutions, and successes in the cities where he preached the Gospel. Conybeare and Howson will greatly aid an appreciation of this case. We

see Athens as it was—the common people, the religionists, and especially the philosophers as they were; the whole scene is life-like; we seem to be there, and on Mars' Hill hear for ourselves the inspired discourse on the spirituality and eternity of God. All the incidental and local allusions are in such perfect parallelism with well-known Grecian history, that we know thereby that the writer was a companion of the apostle. Beyond question, Luke, the beloved physician, was the writer of the Acts of the Apostles.

We conclude, 1. That most of the doctrines taught in the Scriptures on distinct and clear announcement may and ought to be received as true. In respect to them, argumentative discourse is of great utility for purposes of development, illustration, application, and enforcement, but not required as proof of their truth.

2. That all that is required as duty, pertaining either to conduct or character, having respect to actions, to speech, to thought, to emotion, or to volition, is holy, just, and right, suitable to man's character and condition naturally and necessarily arising out of his relations, and ought, of right, to be done.

3. That all that is forbidden as sin either in conduct or character, pertaining either to actions, words, thoughts, emotions, or volitions, is of its nature unholy, detrimental to man's highest good,

a violation of natural or acquired rights, and, in justice and righteousness, ought to be avoided.

4. That the perspicuity, strength, harmony, beauty, universality, applicability, and solemn sanction with which these doctrines and duties are set forth, the superiority of the Scriptures in these and all other valuable regards to all that mere human genius has ever attained in its efforts to illustrate these themes, constitute a strong presumption that the sacred writers were divinely inspired.

5. That the outline prominent events of Scripture history are of such a nature that the *prima facie* evidence is sufficient to establish their authenticity, and that the connection between them and other recorded events is so inseparable that the authenticity of the former carries with it the authenticity of the whole.

6. That the incidental and circumstantial allusions and references of the Scriptures to contemporary language, literature, customs, governments, philosophies, religions, countries, cities, men, and historical events, are so in harmony with what is known to have been actual and real in those times, as to constitute an unanswerable argument for the credibility of the sacred writers.

7. That, therefore, on internal evidence alone we have good and valid reasons, reasons that ought to be satisfactory, for believing that what the Bible says, *God says*.

The obligation to receive the Bible as the Word of God, because of what it is in itself, or on the ground of internal evidences, is antagonized by many objections, most of them trifling and captious, deserving attention on the part of the apologist only because from silence in respect to them some might infer that they are unanswerable.

A few of the more important may merit a full reply.

OBJECTION FROM ABSURDITY.

It is objected that the Bible teaches absurdities; and the alleged absurdity chiefly depended upon to sustain this position is the doctrine of the Trinity. Of course, the objector finds this doctrine in the Book, and he is sustained in the opinion that a divine trinity is a Bible doctrine by the fact that a very large majority of Christian believers in all the ages of the Christian era have so believed. Moreover the objector and the whole Christian Church with inconsiderable exceptions claim that the doctrine pervades the entire volume; intimated in the first sentence by the plural form of the name of God, and affirmed in the last chapter by the declaration that Jesus Christ is "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last." If an absurdity permeate the whole, the whole is thereby vitiated and made void. A brief reply is all the present purpose

requires. That three are one is a mathematical absurdity, and therefore can not be believed if it be affirmed of the same thing in the same sense. That three gods are one god, or that three persons are one person, can not be true; but neither does the Bible nor the Church so state the doctrine of the trinity. The formulas of the Scriptures and the Church creeds affirm that the Eternal One subsists in a manner that admits of a personal distinction, I, thou, he. The doctrine is an affirmation as to the *quo modo*, or manner of the divine subsistence; not that three substances are one substance, but that there are three persons in one God. We have said if this be absurd, it could not be believed, but it has been believed, and is believed by the wisest and best of men; therefore, it is not absurd. If not absurd, on sufficient evidence it may be admitted. It can not be admitted on rational grounds, nor is any man required so to accept it. No one is expected to receive the Bible as a divine book because it teaches a trinity in the Godhead, but the fact that it does so teach is no bar to its reception as a divine word.

OBJECTION FROM MYSTERY.

Again, as an objection to the force of the argument from internal evidence it is alleged that the Bible teaches mysteries; and though these do

not prove it false, as would an absurdity, they prove it useless, and therefore not a revelation from God for man's moral and religious benefit. It is affirmed that such ideas as three persons in one substance, the idea of a trinity in the Godhead, as two natures in one person, the humanity and divinity in one Christ, are wholly unintelligible to thought, utterly unthinkable, and can not therefore be supposed to be matters of divine revelation. To this it is enough to say that the *quomodo* of all existence is to human thought mysterious; affirmations respecting it must to some extent be unintelligible, unthinkable, and yet the fact of existence may and must be believed.

Again, if the objection be valid, it is destructive to all religion; the idea of God, even as first cause, is to human thought mysterious; the affirmation of the divine existence involves more than man can think, and yet we make it and believe it. When one says God is eternal, he does not know fully what he says, yet he knows he says something, and knows that what he says is true. The same may be said of all the mysteries of religion; hence, the mysterious is no bar to belief.

OBJECTION FROM ERROR.

It is affirmed that the Bible teaches what is erroneous, which, if true, proves conclusively that its writers were not inspired, and that therefore it

can not be maintained that what the Bible says, God says. In our times the effort to sustain this objection most frequently made and having most influence in public opinion, has respect to the Bible testimony concerning the creation of the world and of man.

That this earth in any sense had its beginning either by a creation from nothing or by a formation from pre-existent chaotic matter six, eight, or ten thousand years ago, and that man was then created upon it in maturity in the persons of a single pair from whom have come by propagation all the nations of men dwelling upon the face of the whole earth, as the Bible is understood to affirm, is declared on scientific grounds to be untrue. Science and revelation are affirmed to be distinctly antagonistic, and the advantage manifestly with the former. An exhaustive examination of this alleged objection to the inspiration of the Scriptures involves a discussion of all the scientific facts upon which the allegation is founded, which of course can not here be undertaken, and needs not be, because the truth involved in the present discussion does not require such an examination. In the present condition of the controversy, the case is sufficiently obvious to the common sense of mankind.

The questions for present consideration are, Have scientists presented to the world facts

necessitating a rejection of the Bible? have they even made it incumbent upon theologians to review and reconstruct the interpretation? In reference to the creation of the world the science of geology presents satisfactory evidence that the matter of which this globe is composed has existed an indefinitely long period of time; that many of the changes which have occurred in its form, condition, and relation of its parts, have been by slow processes requiring very long time. Those, therefore, who have interpreted the first chapter of Genesis as asserting that this earth was created from nothing not more than ten thousand years since, must reconstruct their interpretation or acknowledge that the Bible teaches error. But, on the other hand, if it be asserted that there was not, at a geologically recent period, such an incoming of divine power reconstructing, arranging, and fitting up this earth as a residence for man as is described in the first chapter of Genesis when properly interpreted, we reply, the assertion lacks proof. It may not be possible for Biblical criticism to show satisfactorily a perfect parallelism between the text of Genesis and the teachings of geology, but in the present infancy of geological science it is as probable that the difficulty arises from defects in the science as that it arises from obscurities in the text. In a word, the subject has its difficulties, but an unqualified contradiction of Bible testimony

has not yet been shown. In respect to the origin and antiquity of man, science only claims to have shown that it is possible man may have come to his present condition and character by a slow development from mere material substance; it is not alleged that any fact known to science proves that he was so developed.

The interests involved in the question of the inspiration of the Scriptures are so momentous, the evidences adduced aside from these questions of science are so many and so weighty, that logical fairness requires that before it can be consistently allowed that in any specific case science contradicts revelation, the testimony of science in respect to that particular must be unquestionable; all scientific men must be agreed that the testimony is indubitable; the case must be one of certainty, no mere theory, no partial induction, no speculation, but an undisputed fact—truth above controversy. Moreover, it is logically fair to claim in this case not only that scientists agree and affirm a conviction of certainty, but also that the case be such that when announced the common mind be competent to apprehend the evidence and to test the conclusiveness of the arguments involved. It is manifest that no such case exists, and that therefore it may be fairly affirmed that no antagonism exists between science and revelation.

To show that the sacred writers when writing the Scriptures, as other men, and as they themselves at other times, were subject to errors in judgment and opinion, and that the books written contain those errors, it is asserted that the apostles believed that the second coming of Christ and the end of the world would transpire before the generation then living had all passed away, and that they have said so in their Epistles. That the apostles did so believe may be admitted, but that they have so said in the canonical Scriptures is denied; contrariwise, they affirm that “of that day and of that hour knoweth no man.” Herein we have, if not an evidence of divine supervision, an evidence of apostolic candor and caution. They believed that some of them would never die, but be instantly changed and caught up to live with Christ and God in heaven; and yet though they so believed, they never so said.

OBJECTION FROM DEFECT.

It is objected to the Bible as the Word of God that it contains many contradictions and discrepancies; that in ancient manuscripts there are numerous various readings, and that its language and style is frequently vulgar, coarse, and corrupting. These objections are all of them, in one form or another, ancient and threadbare—now obsolete, because shown to be baseless, and now

again revived with the airs of discovery, put forth with loud acclaim as triumphant victors, and again left to ignominious burial. Most of them are trivial and captious, and spring from the ignorance of the objector; they appear to the superficial as real defects, but a little careful study suffices to dissipate the appearance.

The perfect adjustment of all the parts of such a book as the Bible, so that there should be no difficulties in a perfect apprehension of its contents, so that adverse criticism were impossible, so that all were plain and obvious without doubt or difficulty, is what no intelligent man, whatever his opinion of the Book itself may be, will demand or expect. All topics of human thought have their difficulties, all sciences have their exceptional cases. In all that pertains to man in his life under the sun, there are fundamental principles; general laws, outlines, forms, most of them scientifically formulated and recognized as known truths—truths established on satisfactory basis and received without doubt or hesitancy; and yet in the application of these principles and laws, in the arts founded upon these sciences there are always exceptions, discrepancies, apparent contradictions, and in all cases these defects arise from the limitations and imperfections of human knowledge. Oftentimes the observed discrepancy leads to successful study, to an explanation of the

discrepancy and to a more perfect science. Manifestly a perfect adjustment requires perfect knowledge. Not until we know all things can we see all truth to be perfectly harmonious with itself. Apply this obvious principle to Biblical interpretation and all the objections now before us will disappear.

That there is even one case of unqualified contradiction is denied; discussion on that point, of course, awaits the production of proof. That there are many apparent antagonisms and real discrepancies is what, as was just now said, is to be expected. That some of these in the present condition of Biblical science can not be fully explained may be readily admitted; but most of those generally adduced have been shown to be susceptible of explanation, and are thereby removed from the category of objections. A few illustrative instances may be mentioned. Paul affirms that man is saved by faith: James affirms that salvation is by works; and here a superficial objector finds a contradiction, but a more careful reading annihilates the difficulty. Paul labors to remove the error of Pharisaical ritualism—the opinion that salvation is conditioned upon a scrupulous observance of rites and ceremonies. James aims his arguments against Antinomian fanaticism; the opinion that salvation is conditioned upon faith only, in such sense that works are of no account.

Again, Paul treats of salvation in its initial, the pardon of sin; James treats of salvation in its completion, admittance to heaven. The topics of discussion are different, and, of course, when men do not speak of the same thing, there can not be a contradiction between them.

Again, the evangelists represent our Lord's trial and crucifixion as occurring at different hours of the day. The fact that in those days there were at Jerusalem two methods of reckoning time, the Roman and the Jewish, may explain the apparent discrepancy. Again, our Gospel says that at our Lord's baptism a voice from heaven was heard saying, "Thou art my beloved Son;" another giving an account of the same event uses the terms, "This is my beloved Son." A plausible explanation is that the reporters were both of them careful only for substance, not at all for form; the fact to be recorded as they saw it was, that a heavenly voice declared the divine Sonship of Jesus: both distinctly state this, the thing to be stated; in this they agree. The form of the statement is unimportant, in that there may be a discrepancy without invalidating the record. The ten commandments are given in different terms in different places, showing conclusively that the sacred writers were not careful as to forms. This principle, agreement as to substance, diversity as to form, will explain very many apparent discrepancies.

Other principles, such as that the same thing viewed from different stand-points by different minds, noted and recorded for different purposes, will be differently described, will also explain other discrepancies.

The chronology of the life of Christ can not be satisfactorily made out. The same events are recorded in the different Gospels in a different order. This is to be accounted for by the obvious fact that neither of the Gospels has the character of a diary; they are not biographies, they are simply memoirs—records of memorable events, recorded on account of the events themselves, not at all with a view to their chronological order. These and similar principles, taken in connection with the obvious fact that entire absence of difficulty in harmonizing truth is possible only to Omniscience, will be sufficient data for the declaration that the contradictions and discrepancies alleged against the Scriptures, do not constitute an adequate bar to belief in those Scriptures as the Word of God.

As to the various readings in ancient manuscripts and versions, critics have observed and counted thousands, but not one of them varies or obscures the Bible testimony in respect to any important fact or doctrine. The manner in which copies were multiplied rendered various readings unavoidable. Not unfrequently several copyists

were employed at the same time and place to write from the voice of one reader, in which the copy of each depended largely upon the pronunciation of the reader and the ear of the writer, and even if the copyist had a verified version before his eye, mistakes would not be uncommon. This fact just alluded to, namely, that no important doctrine is at all affected by the various readings, is, by the way, in itself well-nigh a demonstration of supernatural interference for the preservation and transmission of the pure Word of God.

In respect to what are regarded as vulgarities, it may suffice to say that a book of laws forbidding sin must describe the sins forbidden. Again, no wicked, vile, or vulgar thing is mentioned with commendation, but contrariwise, with abhorrence. Again, the customs of the people in respect to what is proper for speech or writing change, as does also the force of language itself, from time to time, so that what at one time is repulsive at another would be quite the opposite.

OBJECTION FROM OBSCURITY.

Perhaps among the objections not formulated by scientific writers, but having extensive influence with the common mind, may be reckoned one we shall call the objection from obscurity. There are, it is alleged, enveloping the subject of religion as taught in the Bible and by its defenders, perplexing

obscurities. These, it is affirmed, make faith so difficult that it can not be obligatory, but the rather make doubt the more reasonable, and prove that this religion and the book that teaches it can not be divine. It is often thought, and sometimes said, that if the Christian religion be true, it is reasonable to expect that truths of such momentous import, in which such vastly important interests are involved, would be so communicated to mankind, with such clearness of statement, with such conclusiveness of argument, with such demonstrations of truthfulness, with such evidences of a divine origin, that doubt or uncertainty in respect to them would be an impossibility. That is to say, it is alleged that if Christianity be divine it is reasonable to expect that it would be revealed either such in itself or in its accompaniments as would compel a conviction of its truth, so that there would, of necessity, be but one religion upon earth, and all men would be Christians. Whereas it is further alleged that the Bible is such that men may honestly doubt whether it teaches the true religion, and if it does, its manner of teaching is such that men may honestly doubt whether they know or can know what it does teach; hence there are many unbelievers who intelligently, and satisfactorily to their own minds, reject the Bible as a rule of faith and practice; and many are half believers and half doubters, and there are also

among believers many sects and all varieties of opinions.

It is evident that this objection is a denial on *prima facie* evidence of the truth of Christianity, and is at the same time—since there is no such universal religion in the world as it contemplates—an affirmation that the true religion, if there be any such, does not consist of very momentous truth or involve any very important interest. Let this be stated plainly. If the true religion involves momentous truths and important interests, it must be that it is so revealed as to compel universal acceptance. But there is no religion compelling universal acceptance; therefore, the true religion does not involve momentous truths and important interests. The Christian religion does involve momentous truths and important interests; therefore, it is not the true religion. The arguments are conclusive; but both conclusions are false, because the first premise is false. It is not certain that all important truths will command universal acceptance. The expectation that they would be so revealed as to do so may appear to the mind of a rationalist a reasonable anticipation, but the facts show that it is not. It is reasonable to expect that whatever appertains to man's highest good will be so placed within his reach as that a conviction of certainty in respect to it is possible; and it is here affirmed that this is true of the Christian religion.

In all the interests of life a reasonable ground for faith and action is attainable—fatal doubt is not a necessity—but still no interest is such that doubt and fatal mistake is impossible; men do doubt as to matters that might be and ought to be the plainest possible. Some doubt even their own existence, doubt the real existence of a material universe, doubt the being of God! Man in this life is in a state of trial. His trial turns, more than on any other one point, on his mental habit in respect to the truth, specially in respect to religious truth. If a man habitually indulge a spirit of candor with a competent desire to know what is true, and have a fixed purpose, knowing the truth, to practice it regardless of cost or consequence, he will certainly attain, under God, to such a knowledge and practice as will secure to him all the valuable ends of his existence.

This objection from obscurity, or perhaps more properly from reasonable ground for doubt, or the want of adequate evidence, though substantially the same as just now discussed, sometimes takes on another form. Not only do rationalistic minds allege this objection, but also the superstitious. These require a sign, a specific revelation to them personally, a miracle wrought for their special benefit, to demonstrate to them that the word spoken or written is indeed the word of God. The Bible, say they, is written in common human

language; the peculiarities of mental constitution and educational prejudice in the writers are plainly evinced by the turn of thought and style of writing; its preachers are but men of like passions with other men; the whole matter seems human. Let God speak—let a voice from heaven say “This is my book, seek ye out of the Scripture and learn my will;” or “This is my servant, my son, hear ye him.” Let God speak and we will listen, learn, and obey. This is evidently a requirement scarcely deserving a reply, yet let it suffice to say, whatever may be said of it, it is a demand that has not been supplied for the last eighteen centuries at least, and in its form never, and it is reasonable to infer that it never will be. Again, if granted, it would defeat its own object, since if what is now called miraculous were to become common, the miraculous would cease to become such, nature’s uniformity would be eliminated, and such a thing as a variation from nature’s laws would be impossible. Again, miracles have no direct agency in promoting either morality or religion; their office is indirect. Morality and piety consist in a voluntary obedience to recognized authority; miracles authenticate the authority, but do not produce, nor even tend to produce, the obedience; they excite wonder, but not love; they astonish, overwhelm, subdue it may be, but they do not convert. Lastly, the objection is not honestly made. Let God

speak, says the objector, and I will obey. God has spoken, and is still speaking with unnumbered voices—voices of commanding eloquence—and still obedience is refused. Men do not obey all that is evidently divine. Most men habitually, all men sometimes, neglect what they know, or may and ought to know, is the will of God concerning them.

All the objections urged against the Christian religion are alleged objections to the Bible, and might therefore be classed with those just above noticed as bearing upon the argument from internal evidence; but, having replied to those most commonly produced, other objections may be deferred for future discussion. The above, it is hoped, will be regarded as sufficient to show that the objections most relied upon do not constitute a reasonable ground for the rejection of the Bible as a divinely given book. The momentous interests involved in the subjects of its discussion will commend it to the candid consideration of all right-minded persons; and its excellencies will be by them admitted as such. Its superiority over all other treatises on the same subjects will be regarded as a strong intimation that its origin is higher than human, and will at least commend it as the most authoritative rule of faith and practice in man's possession in the form of a book. To the thought of the present writer, the

argument from internal evidence is conclusive. Take the Bible for what it evidently in itself is, with all the difficulties of interpretation, with the mysteries connected with and suggested by its teachings, with the doubts and uncertainties necessarily attendant upon even its most careful study, it so fully harmonizes with all known truths, it is so wisely, wonderfully, and efficiently adapted to produce the highest good of which man has any knowledge, that the conclusion seems resistless that it is divinely given as man's authoritative rule of faith and practice. It is not intended to disparage the value of other evidences; Christianity could not do without them, God has not wrought miracles and uttered prophecies in vain; but, as we see it, the book itself bears sufficient and satisfactory evidences of its divinity. We advance to Argument Fourth.

CHAPTER V.

ARGUMENT FOURTH: COLLATERAL EVIDENCES.

“Surely there is no enchantment against Jacob, neither is there any divination against Israel: according to this time it shall be said of Jacob and Israel, What hath God wrought? I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. Sanctify them through thy truth: thy Word is truth. I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. After that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”

PRELIMINARY REMARKS.

IN what follows, an argument for the divinity of religion is not distinguished from an argument for the inspiration of the Scripture; the Bible and the religion it teaches are inseparable. This seems, therefore, a fitting place to say a word on the theories of inspiration. What is intended by the term? in what sense were the writers of the Scriptures inspired? On this subject great difference of opinion has obtained. Some seem to conceive that the sacred writers were so inspired

as that it were the same as if the human were wholly absent; the mind and muscles of the man being the same as the pen he moved, a mere instrument used by a divine agent. Others conceive of the human agency as intelligent and voluntary, having a distinct work assigned to it, but regard that work as that of an amanuensis; God the thinker, man the writer. And still others conceive of the divine agency as employed simply in supervision with such occasional interferences as the case might require; the human agency being left to do all that it is competent to do.

These and similar conceptions, of which there are many, all evidently regard the human and the divine as mutually exclusive; by so much as the divine is present, the human is absent, and by so much as the human is present, the divine is absent. Other thinkers conceive of the divine and the human agencies as co-operating, interpenetrating so that the greater the divine the greater the human, and the less the divine the less the human. This latter conception is by far the preferable—indeed, it seems axiomatic—it is in harmony with the Christian idea of man living, moving, and having his being in God. The work of religion is evidently a result from the co-operation of the divine and the human agencies. Man is a worker together with God; all revelations are to, through, and by human instrumentality. “Holy men of

old spoke as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." As one man gives to another what is to the receiver a new idea, so God in some manner—the method and the means are not important, it may be by an audible voice, it may be in vision, or it may be by immediate impression on the mind—communicates to man what, without such communication, he would or could never know. The powers of apprehension are elevated, quickened, strengthened, so that old truths are more clearly conceived. All the mental faculties are under a divine influence, elevated, quickened, strengthened, inspired, so that religious truths are conceived and formulated as the unaided reason of man could never conceive and state them. Thus a knowledge of the true religion becomes a possession of the human mind; it is embodied in forms of speech, in historic events, in religious institutions, in forms of worship, in rites and ceremonies.

For the benefit of succeeding generations, the religion thus made known and embodied is committed to writing. There may be many to whom "it may seem good to set forth in order a declaration of those things which they most surely believe." By a providential supervision and direction it is brought to pass that among all that is written, a full and complete exponent and declaration of the truth is published to the world,

and by the same providential interference, through the instrumentality of an agreeing consenting Church, from among all the writings extant, a collection is gathered and published as an authorized version, a standard authority. The judgment of the Church as to what is an authentic, full, and complete setting forth of the religion the Church has received as divine, is the divinely employed instrumentality by which the authorized standard is collected and published, just as the mind and will of the inspired prophet was the divinely employed instrumentality of the original communication. Thus God and man co-operating from the first impulse on the mind of the prophet to the last movements of printers and publishers, a volume of inspired and authoritative instruction is furnished for man's guidance in morals and religion. The fact of the divine agency through the whole of all the processes is made known by indubitable proofs, securing beyond reasonable doubt assurances that the religion taught is truly divine; that the volume in which that religion is set forth is genuine, was written by the persons claimed as its authors, was written originally in substance as it is now published, has been preserved and transmitted uncorrupt and pure; that it is authentic; that what it teaches and declares is true, and that it is canonical; that in the judgment of the Church providentially

directed in the exercise of its judgment this Book is of divine authority.

The view of the doctrine of inspiration herein taken, then, is briefly that the divine agency has been so employed in the production of the Bible that it has come to pass, that we have here a divinely given book; that it furnishes all the moral and religious information needful for all the purposes of the present life; that it is pure from any admixture with error and is an authoritative rule of faith and practice. This "Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

If the Christian religion be an expression or exponent of the will of God, if it be the thoughts of God concerning man, his duty, and his destiny, embodied and set forth among men, then the Book which describes that religion, which is the standard by which all questions concerning that religion are determined, must be such that what it says, God says. An argument for the divinity of the Christian religion is an argument for the divinity of the Bible.

1. Among the class of evidences commonly called collateral, the success of the Gospel during the first three hundred years of Christian history holds a prominent place. The argument is oft

repeated and familiar, the case is clear and requires but a brief statement. The Christian religion commences its history with the missionary labors of twelve men. These are men of but ordinary natural endowments, with the educational advantages of common life; they are mostly fishermen, changing their avocations and entering upon public life in the maturity of their years; they are Jews, and as such are held in low esteem by the people among whom most of their labors are expended. Their labor consisted chiefly, nay exclusively, in repeating, wherever they could obtain hearers, in synagogues, in market-places, in schools of learning, in private dwellings, by the wayside, at the corners of the streets of large towns and cities, the story of the life and death of Jesus; who, according to their own account, was an obscure prophet of Nazareth, condemned by the chief priests and elders of Jerusalem as guilty of blasphemy, and executed as a malefactor under the authority of the Emperor of Rome, and who, according to the theories of unbelievers, was either a myth, an impostor, or a fanatic. The people, in whose hearing they repeated this story, the same on any natural theory as a fiction of their own invention, repeated without art or eloquence, and without a knowledge of the language of the people they addressed (for the apostles were unlearned men at mature age, and had

no opportunity to acquire a knowledge of foreign language, and dialects) were citizens of the most renowned cities of the then known world, educated under the influences of the age next succeeding the Augustan Age, justly celebrated as that of the most distinguished classical authors. The minds of their hearers, wherever they rehearsed their story, were preoccupied by the prejudices of long established and cordially cherished religions; religions associated with their literatures, arts, sciences, governments, domestic institutions, and personal experiences; religions sustained by the habits and customs of the people, by the learning of their schools, by the interests of their trade and commerce, by the strength of their laws, and by the power of their armies and navies. The story they told having no interest in itself, if it be a myth, or, if being a pretended history of a real person, its subject be an impostor or a fanatic, and told without argument or ornament, held out no inducement to the hearer tending to make him a proselyte, no promise of wealth, honor, pleasure, high position, or good estate; contrariwise its first requirement was self-crucifixion, involving the total abandonment of all self-interest and the sacrifice of whatever might oppose a profession of faith—friends, home, wife, child, life itself. Their immediate reception was that of a most violent opposition and persecution;

they were stoned, beaten with stripes, loaded with bonds, cast into prisons, tortured, tormented, and all save one died the death of martyrs. They preached the Gospel, that is, told the story of the life, death, resurrection, and ascension of Jesus, alleging that he is the Son of God and the Savior of men, with a view to displace all other religions, especially the polytheistic idolatries of the times; to reform society and the lives of men; to modify all systems of education, trade, and government; to bring all men to the acknowledgment of the fatherhood of the only living and true God, and of the brotherhood of all mankind. What now is the *a priori* prospect of success? On any theory of the unbeliever the case is the case of an infant child in a den of ferocious beasts, and the prospective history may be written in four words—to be eaten instanter.

Before proceeding to notice the actual result, let a few of the improbabilities of any theory of unbelief receive attention. If there were no providential interpositions favoring the first proclamation of the Gospel, how is it to be accounted for that the Gospel was preached at all? With the exception of Paul (himself not of the twelve) the preachers were unlearned men, and could not command language for public discourse suited to any hearers beyond the small circle of their own immediate neighborhood. The apostles must have

had a miraculous gift of tongues, or they never could have preached the Gospel where, on the best historical evidence, we know they did preach it with great success. Again, on the supposition that the Gospel they preached was not true as to what was declared of the supernatural and miraculous—that is, on the supposition that the story told was a fiction, or that it was the history of a real man, ornamented, highly colored with fictitious additions, with interlineations of poetical and marvelous events—how is it to be accounted for that such a story, told in such a way, by such persons, under such circumstances, should awaken among the hearers any interest whatever? Especially, how is it to be accounted for that it should excite violent opposition and persecution unto death? Idle stories told by obscure, unlearned, ineloquent, meanly appearing itinerants do not ordinarily excite much interest even among the transient crowds that throng public places in populous cities, much less among people accustomed to listen to eloquent discourses from learned statesmen, philosophers, and literary men. The immediate results on the minds of the hearers of the Gospel during the apostolic age can not be consistently accounted for on any other theory than that the Gospel itself is the truth of God, and that the apostles who preached it were endowed with power from on high.

Again, if the Gospel be a fiction, or a history ornamented with fictions, the apostles knew that it was such, and that in proclaiming it they were wholly dependent on their own resources, and must expect only those results which usually issue from religious frauds. How, then, can it be accounted for that they continued to preach to their lives' end, through toils, deprivations, sufferings, and inflictions of bonds and imprisonments? Surely liars do not often preach against lying for the sake of dying for their lies; deceivers do not preach against deception for the sake of dying in support of deception. The sufferings and inflictions through which the apostles preached the Gospel are proofs positive that they believed what they preached, and that they did so not from any personal motive, but in obedience to a divine command.

Hanging about the question of success we have, then, these probabilities: (1.) That without supernatural interposition the preaching of the Gospel, for several years, at least, immediately succeeding the death of Christ until converts could be raised up and trained in the knowledge of foreign tongues, would be restricted within the narrow limits of those people who understood the language spoken by unlearned men among the Jews. (2.) That among the Jews themselves—and if by any means the Gospel could be preached

among others among them also—if it were but an idle story, as it is if not true, it would not be likely to survive its proclamation any appreciable length of time for the want of interest either in the Gospel itself or any of its accompaniments. (3.) That if by any means an interest was awakened, that interest would be antagonistic, as is evidenced by the facts of the case as they were, and by the magnitude and multitude of interests which the Gospel invaded; and the story being a false and idle tale, supported only by the feeblest agencies, would, within a very short period, perish from opposition.

But what was the actual result? Immediate success in Jerusalem and throughout Judea, where, within a short time, disciples were numbered by thousands; and in spite of persecutions in which great numbers were put to death, within fifty years Churches were planted in all the principal cities of the Roman Empire, and before the close of the third century Christianity became the religion of the empire.

Tertullian, a Christian apologist of the second century, addressing the Proconsul of Africa, says: “If we Christians were disposed to array ourselves as open or secret enemies of our opposers, a sufficient force of numbers is not wanting to us. Many of the Moors and Marcomanni, as well as other tribes more remote, even to the ends of the

earth and throughout the world, are with us. We are but of yesterday, and yet we have filled all your places, your cities, your islands, your castles, your towns, your council-houses, your very camps, your tribes, your palace, your senate, your forum. We have left you nothing but your temples. If we should break away from you and should remove into some other country, the mere loss of so many citizens would overwhelm your government, and would itself be an effectual punishment. Doubtless you would be frightened at your own solitude. The silence and stupor which you would witness would cause the world over which you reign to appear as dead. Your enemies would then be more than your citizens who should remain."

Similar testimonies from other Christian Fathers furnish indubitable historical evidence that the success of the Gospel under the circumstances of its first publication was one of the most wonderful events recorded in history. Heathen writers, especially Tacitus, Suetonius, and Pliny, all of the first and first part of the second century, testify with equal clearness to the same thing. The fact is beyond dispute; to account for it on any theory of unbelief is impossible. Gibbon, in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," has made the attempt and utterly failed. The failure of such a one as he, after such an effort as he there puts

forth, is full assurance that success need not be expected elsewhere.

The success of the Gospel in the first three centuries of Christian history is reasonably regarded as adequate proof (1) that the Gospel itself is true, a correct record of historic events, especially the leading events in the life of Christ—his teachings, miracles, death, resurrection, and ascension—events that actually occurred precisely as represented, and under the precise circumstances stated; (2) that its doctrines are the doctrines of the true religion, especially as the promulgation of the Gospel consisted mostly in the preaching of “Christ crucified,” that the doctrine of Christ’s death as a necessary, vicarious, propitiatory, and provisional sacrifice for sin to make pardon and salvation possible is a fundamental truth in the divinely appointed system of human salvation; (3) that the apostolic ministration was attended and made effectual by the presence and agency of God in the person of the Holy Ghost.

The most common objection to this argument is that success is no proof of truth; that error, falsehood, and fraud sometimes succeed; that false religions have been and are as prevalent as any. To this objection it may be replied that it is not claimed that success is, in all cases, proof of the right, but that it is so in such a case as this. (1.) Here, if the statements made be false, the

hearer has the means of showing that it is so. Moses affirms that the people had heard the voice of God; if they had not they knew it. It is not thus where error succeeds. Mahomet affirms that he was caught up to heaven; his hearers can not prove that he was not so translated. (2.) Here the agencies and instrumentalities are inadequate for success on the supposition of error or falsehood. A few fishermen could not convert intelligent and learned men by simply rehearsing an uninteresting fiction. Not so where error succeeds. Mahomet converts the nomadic Arabs by carrying the Koran in one hand and the sword in the other. Again, false religions succeed not by the force of error, but in spite of it. All religions embrace some truths, all teach much truth that is valuable and powerful, and their success may be more rationally referred to the power of the truth inculcated than to any force inhering in the falsehoods and superstitions taught. Mohammedanism is monotheistic; it teaches the spirituality, personality and unity of God—the first cause and upholder of all things, absolute sovereign and only proper object of religious worship; it deserved, therefore, to displace the polytheistic idolatries which it supplanted.

2. To the argument from the success attending the promulgation of the Gospel during the first three centuries may be added an argument from

the progress of Christianity during all the ages since, especially from its progress and advancement during the last two hundred years. This latter differs from the former in strength and conclusiveness, but has sufficient weight to be deserving of attentive consideration. The difference consists in this, that in the beginning the human agencies and instrumentalities considered as assurances of success were utterly devoid of promise, and opposing influences were numerous and powerful. Subsequently, Christian institutions having gained a place and being held in high consideration, human agencies and instrumentalities became many and influential, favoring circumstances multiplied, and opposition comparatively ceased, so that the perpetuity and progress of Christianity in the later years of its history does not constitute an argument so decisive and determinative as does success in its beginning. Though differing in degrees of strength, the arguments (with one exception in the points to be proved) are the same in kind. For the inauguration of the Christian system the apostles were specially endowed. They were inspired men in a sense in which none have been inspired since the termination of the apostolic age—inspired to teach religion authoritatively as did their Master; with them their office ceased, and with it its special qualifying endowment.

The argument from perpetuity and progress,

like the one from primal success, proves that the Christian religion is true, and also that its teachers though not endowed with apostolic functions and qualifications, are accompanied, sustained, and aided by the divine presence and power. The command to preach the Gospel unto all nations was coupled with a promise of the divine presence unto the end of the world, and the progress of the Gospel proves that this promise has been fulfilled. This is the argument; let the case be stated. On the hypothesis of unbelief, the primal success arose from some artificial resorts, some fortuitous circumstances, some agencies merely human or at most diabolical, all of which were of their nature transitory and temporary, and must have ceased with the age in which they existed, and with the conditions which gave them rise. If, then, their resultants survived their demise, the continuance must be referred to new supports. Christianity is a baseless fabric, a solemn cheat, a silly superstition. What is the probability that new supports will be forthcoming in its emergency adequate to secure its perpetuity and further progress? It may be replied Christianity incorporates much truth. Notwithstanding its trinitarianism, its theology is a pronounced monotheism, its ethics are the purest in the world; it has, therefore, the natural elements of life and perpetuity. But, if the question be pressed as to

its baseless errors, its silly superstitions, what is the prospect of their survival? the most obvious answer, the sole resort and only theory is, that in addition to the conserving influence of the truths with which it is incorporated, having become the religion of the civilized world, its popularity would perpetuate it, the prejudices of education would foster it, and the party zeal of its adherents would secure its advancement.

In reply it is admitted that in some cases the actual existence of an institution having favor with the people among whom it is established, the fostering influence of educational prejudices and the party zeal of adherents do furnish adequate pledge and promise of future prosperity, but not so in this case. We insist that Christianity is such that, being false, it not only could not obtain a footing in the world, but also if by any means it might secure a commencement, it could not long maintain its position, much less make advancement.

First, because its claims in all that distinguishes it from a speculative theism are, if false, so transcendently exorbitant. If Christianity be an error, it is a tremendous error. The very vastness of its pretensions if unaccompanied with indubitable proofs would repel all thoughtful minds from it, and from all with which it might be associated. When Philip said unto Jesus, "Lord, shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us," Jesus

answered, "Have I been so long time with you, and yet hast thou not known me, Philip? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; and how sayest thou, then, Shew us the Father? . . . Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake." Again, Jesus said, "I and my Father are one." This testimony of Christ concerning himself, the disciples received doubtingly, tremblingly at first, but, after the resurrection and the baptism of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost, fully, heartily, confidently, and boldly went forth every-where, preaching not only that Jesus was God's Son, but also that he was God manifest in the flesh. He was Logos in the beginning with God, and God; was made flesh; dwelt among men; and a theanthropic Christ became an expiatory sacrifice for the sins of men. That the disciples of the apostolic age and the Church of patristic times worshiped Christ as God is as clearly established as any historic event. An assumption of such tremendous import, if an assumption merely, it would seem must be rejected by all instantly on announcement; and if, by any factitious furor, popular excitement, extraneous circumstance, the delusion should be indulged for a time merely, the sober second thought would dissipate the infatuation and characterize the assumption as the height of blasphemy.

Second, because the requirements of Christianity are unwelcome, forbidding, distasteful, repugnant to the natural character of the mass of mankind. We know that in some conditions of the Church its requirements have been congenial to the popular tastes; that in all conditions its ritualistic services have been observed by many from mere force of habit established by educational training, or from mere conformity to the customs of society, and also in all times hypocrites have associated with its adherents; but of these cases we do not now speak. The self-denial, crucifixion of self, and deadness to the world required by the Christian religion has been perpetuated in the world, has prospered with different degrees of progress in different periods of Church history more or less in all the ages. The argument before us is an inference from this fact; the problem on hand is to account for it. The Church theory is, that whenever and wherever "Christ crucified" is faithfully preached, then and there the Holy Spirit is present, inspiring the minister, imparting to him a clearness of apprehension, a facility of statement, a power of argument and persuasion,—in a word, the Spirit is an unction by which the speaker speaks as unaided men can not speak, and while he cries, in the hearing of the people, "Behold the Lamb of God," the spirit also imparts to the attentive, candid, prayerful hearer power to

appreciate and appropriate the truth declared. The Spirit takes of the things of Christ, and shows them unto such as are right-minded toward the truth; so that a conviction of certainty that the word spoken is the truth divine takes possession of the mind; the hearer under this influence of the Spirit becomes a believer, and believing, is saved from his sins. We affirm that no other theory satisfactorily accounts for the history of vital godliness as it has obtained in the world through the instrumentality of Gospel preaching. Admitting this as the theory and only theory of the fact involved is admitting the truth of Christianity; and that admitted, we are warranted in saying that what the Bible says, God says.

The common objection to this argument, whether formulated or not, even in the mind of the objector, is in substance a denial of the fact stated. It usually exists in the form of an inference from the prevalence of sin and iniquity and from the apparent indifference of the public mind to religion and its claims. From the fact that sin and iniquity abound, it is inferred that Christianity is a failure, and consequently any argument for its truth and divinity drawn from success, progress, or prosperity is the sophism of an assumed premise. To this it may suffice to say, if from the prevalence of sin and iniquity in Christian communities it may be inferred that Christianity is a failure, then

any other system or agency claiming to be divinely appointed or wisely adapted for the promotion of virtue and the suppression of vice is itself also a failure, for the same reason. Immoralities abound; if we may say, therefore, orthodoxy is a failure we may also say liberalism is a failure, and so also is theism, pantheism, and all other theories. If for this reason we may say the Church is a failure so also may we say the family, the school, the State, are failures; science, art, philosophy, all civilizing agencies, yea, life itself is a failure; man is the doomed subject of sin, human existence is an abortion, God is disappointed and evil is triumphant. But, again, if we inquire whether Christianity be a failure, logical fairness requires that the answer be given in the light of what Christianity itself proposes, and not in the light of what its enemies or ill-advised friends propose for it. What does the Gospel propose? What are the ends contemplated in the preaching of "Christ crucified?" What has the incarnation, life, death, resurrection, and ascension of God's Son done for mankind? It has saved the race from extinction in the persons of the first pair; it has secured for all mankind the conditions of a fair probation; it has made the salvation of all men a possibility; it has actually elevated an innumerable company to eternal life; it has pervaded general society with reformatory influences; it has

maintained in the world a visible Church eminently pure and evidently divine.

Again, it is to be remembered that Christianity treats men as moral responsible agents, not as machines. Its influences are persuasive, not compulsory. Its success is to be measured by the strength of the motives it presents, not by the service it compels. And again, it is here affirmed that the history of the past and the present signs of the times, do fully sustain the assertion that vital godliness through the agencies and instrumentalities of the Christian religion has been from the first and is now progressive, and that to an extent and under circumstances which demonstrate that the preaching of the Gospel is attended by a divine influence. The actual presence of such an influence proves that the Gospel preached is true.

3. As collateral evidences of Christianity we have mentioned the argument from success during the first three centuries of the Christian Era, and the argument from perpetuity and progress through all the ages of Church history. We now proceed to discuss the argument from the effects produced on the character, conduct, and condition of mankind.

This may seem at first thought to be the same as above. It is very intimately connected with it, but is not the same; it must be treated separately.

First, we cast a glance at the beneficial and benevolent intents of the Holy Scriptures. Suppose every individual of the whole human family were endowed with powers of perception adequate to a correct apprehension of all objects of sense, all material qualities, with sufficient scientific knowledge correctly to interpret the indications of sight, hearing, and the other senses. Suppose they possessed powers of comparison and judgment such as would in every case affirm the relations of things and thoughts just as in reality they are, and powers of reasoning such as would in every case detect sophism, apprehend the precise conclusiveness of arguments and make the conclusions required by the premises. Suppose imagination always conceived such ideals as were natural, improving and pleasing, and taste such that all indulged percepts and concepts were refining and elevating as well as agreeable. Suppose the desires and affections were of their nature such as always to be exercised toward proper objects and always corresponding in degree with real and relative worth. Suppose the conscience in all its functions discriminating, impulsive, and retributive, were perfectly adjusted to man's moral relations and obligations, and the will always in harmony with antecedent sensibilities and intellections. Suppose every man understood the laws of his physical constitution so perfectly

that he would always know by what means he might secure perfect health; and suppose his relations to the soil and the seasons, his knowledge of agriculture, mechanics, and commerce, were such that agreeable toil, healthful exercise were all that were required for necessities, conveniences, and luxuries, leaving a competent portion of time for learned acquirements and social pleasures. Suppose in every family the wants and wishes of each member were wisely anticipated and lovingly met by the other members of the household. Suppose neighbor with neighbor, in social and commercial interests, cheerfully and cordially did to others as each would that others do to them. Suppose that all legislation was just and equitable, all natural and acquired rights being respected and defended, all courts of justice well versed in the principles of jurisprudence so that all matters of difference in respect to individual, social, and civil rights and obligations would every time be promptly adjusted in a manner honorable and satisfactory. Suppose, in a word, that all the inhabitants of this world during their earthly life secured a full and perfect development of their physical, intellectual, moral, and religious natures; enjoyed the advantages of good society to the full extent of their ability to appropriate such advantages, and by the improvement of their opportunities attained to a condition

of perfect health, happiness, and long life, and at the last simply fell asleep sweetly to wake up in another world fully prepared for all that awaits them there. Were this the character, conduct, condition, and experience of all mankind, would this world be any different from what the Bible proposes to make it? To ask this question, to one conversant with the Bible, is to answer it. The Savior has taught all his disciples to pray that the will of God may be done *in earth* as it is in heaven. If this prayer be ever answered, the suppositions just made will be more than realized. War will give place to agriculture, selfishness to mutual good-will, and earth again become an Eden. The tendencies of all the doctrines, principles, and precepts of Christianity are toward such a state of things; and so far forth as the Bible has had free course, so far forth as it has not been hindered by the voluntary indulgence of depraved and selfish desires, passions, appetites, and lusts, the world under its influence has been making approximations toward this desired and intended consummation.

The precise extent to which the principles and precepts of the Gospel have taken effect in the world can be measured only by omniscience; but yet the obvious effects of Christianity are so numerous and so beneficial, that an attentive consideration of them can not fail to convince the

candid observer that the system which gives rise to such results must be divine. One method of obtaining a conception of Gospel results is to take direct observation of them as evinced in the actual condition of mankind as to private character, domestic, social, civil, and commercial institutions. This is most determinative, because most direct; it is most difficult, because the actual condition of man is resultant from many and diverse agencies and influences. Man is largely a creature of circumstances. Climate, soil, local scenery, as well as science, art, commerce, and government, have an influence, and the individual will has potency adequate to the production of a virtuous character and life under circumstances the most adverse, and the same individual will has power to practice vice and produce a character most malignantly vicious in spite of the strongest incentives to virtue. However, with all the difficulties attending a direct observation of these influences and results, there are obviously prominent in Christian communities peculiarities of individual character, of domestic and social customs, of whatever goes to make up the civilization of a people, which are clearly traceable to the direct and sole agency of the Christian religion.

The distinct apprehension of natural and acquired rights, as those rights have respect to life, liberty, property, and reputation, the profound

respect entertained for them, and the sense of individual responsibility for the maintenance of those rights, both as they respect the person himself and his neighbor as well, which are every-where observable in Christian communities as nowhere else, are manifest results of the ethical teachings of the Holy Scriptures. The influences of the Christian religion upon the marriage relation in elevating woman from the condition of slavery to be the companion and equal of her husband, in the destruction of polygamy and in the restrictions to divorce, not only evince that its tendencies are beneficial and benevolent, but these influences of the Gospel upon domestic life are so many, so efficient, conquer so many antagonisms, and confer so many blessings, that they of themselves proclaim the divine authorship of the religion that gave them birth. The cessation of auguries and soothsayings, the silence of oracles who had for ages peeped and muttered to the delusion of mankind, which immediately succeeded the advent of Jesus Christ, the termination of idolatries wherever the knowledge of Christ becomes appreciable, the restriction of idol worship within the limits of pagan darkness, all clearly demonstrate not only that Christ came to destroy the works of the devil, but also that at the approach of his presence demons depart.

The influence of the Gospel by its diffusion

and defense of the doctrines of the fatherhood of God and brotherhood of man, upon war, slavery and oppressive governments, constitutes another conclusive argument for its divine authorship. Arbitration was never resorted to by any nations for the settlement of differences judged to be just cause of war, except Christian nations. As the Christian religion becomes dominant in public opinion and prevalent with officers of government, wars become less frequent, and where they exist their methods are modified, cruelties are eliminated and humanities are multiplied in the systems of warfare and the practices of warriors. Slavery in the Roman Empire was so modified by the diffusion of Christian influences among the people, that it became virtually extinct. It is lamentably true that slavery, as well as war and all other evils, has had existence in Christian lands, and has been sustained and extended by men whose faith in the Christian religion was doubtless strong and sincere; but it must be manifest at a moment's reflection that this has always and every-where been in spite of, and not at all in consequence of, the tendencies and influences of Christian teachings. At all times and every-where, just in proportion as the principles of the Gospel became dominant, slavery has been utterly, entirely abolished, or so modified as to lose its unjust and cruel characteristics. The tendency of Christian

civilization to modify governmental agencies, transferring civil powers from hereditary absolute monarchies to aristocracies, and from these to democracies and republics, diffusing knowledge of civil affairs and awakening interest in them among the common people, and thus qualifying the masses for self-government, is patent upon the surface of history. Republican institutions are not attempted anywhere but in Christian commonwealths, and there they succeed only in proportion to the prevalence of a pure Christianity. Educational advantages are created where they are not, quickened and multiplied where they are, made accessible to all classes without distinction of sex, color, or condition; made available for the practical ends of life, and put under contribution for the development of intellect, the culture of taste, and the elevation of the common standard of humanity, by the fostering influences of the Christian religion, and by them in a manner, to a degree and extent not attained by any other agency. In nearly all Christian communities the key to all knowledge is within the reach of the poorest and most obscure. All may, if they will, though of low degree, advance themselves through learning to high attainments, wealth, and dignity.

That Christianity fosters literature and science is obvious from the fact that throughout Christendom, with very rare and unimportant exceptions,

all successful and influential institutions of learning were founded by the voluntary contributions of Christian men—contributions made for a Christian purpose, and under a sense of religious obligation. Furthermore, these institutions are very generally manned by Christian men, not a small portion of whom are ministers. The instruction of the young in literature and science and the preaching of the Gospel are, by common consent, regarded as co-ordinate avocations, mutually co-operative and largely identical. Christian missionaries, wherever they go throughout the world, erect seminaries of learning in juxtaposition with the church, and divide their labors between the school-room and the sanctuary. It is, however, with a strangely bold effrontery, sometimes affirmed that the Church, and especially the ecclesiastics, are always the enemies of scientific progress, and that civilization makes advance, if at all, in spite of churchly and ecclesiastical power. The experience of Galileo and similar instances are quoted in proof, and all this when it is patent that such cases are exceptions, and that at the time of their occurrence all the science extant in the world was within the Church, and was sustained solely by the Church. In the dark ages of Christian history, but for the Church, learning had become extinct. Is it said that the first and most persistent opposers of what is new are ministers of religion? We reply, so

ought it to be; especially if the new averment have a bearing upon religion. Every thing new deserves to be persecuted—the interests of truth require it. Antiquity, other things being equal, is *prima facie* evidence of merit, and must not give place to mere novelty. Let new theories be tested, tried by a persistent opposition, and when proved to be true, held fast.

The Christian religion is a preventive of pauperism; it diffuses the means of physical comforts among the masses, equalizes the financial condition of the population, increases the wealth of the nation, and elevates the common style of life. This it does by making industry and economy not only honorable but also obligatory. It teaches that the use of this world, as not abusing it, is required by divine command—is rewarded not only in this life, but also in the life to come, and that its opposite will be punished in the retributions of the future world. It teaches that the oppression of the poor is a great offense to God, and that to share with the unfortunate is especially well pleasing to him. God is our common Father, and we be brethren. Any member of the human family upon whom we can confer a benefit is our neighbor, whom we are required to love as we love ourselves. That such principles tend to increase and diffuse wealth, and where not obstructed by sensuality, or selfishness, do actually increase and

diffuse wealth, must be obvious on the slightest reflection.

In respect to whatever is beneficial to mankind, let the whole surface of the earth be examined and different sections compared, and it will be found that the most advanced civilization, the most desirable state of things, is where the Christian religion has most influence. The claim of the Gospel that "godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is," will be fully sustained by a careful examination of the case. The Bible—the source and foundation of the Christian religion—is, therefore, a book largely beneficial to mankind. But if it be not what it professes—"given by inspiration of God"—and if, therefore, as must be in that case, its leading characteristic doctrines be false, it is manifestly a misleading book—misleading in most important matters—and ought to be, as it would be in that case, the most mischievous of all books extant. The argument is conclusive. What is eminently beneficial must be truthful. The Bible is so; therefore, it is what it professes to be—a God-given volume; what it says, God says.

CHAPTER VI.

ARGUMENT FIFTH: ARGUMENT FROM EXPERIENCE.

“He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself. He that asketh, receiveth. If any man will do his will he shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God.”

THE momentous interests involved in religion warrant an expectation that in some way a conviction of certainty in respect to them is attainable. If man be immortal—if he be a sinner, have transgressed the law of God, and be thus exposed to penalty; if the peril of sin be inconceivably great; if only one way of salvation be provided; if the present life be at all determinative of destiny in a future state of being—then surely it is reasonable to expect that the end of human existence and the means by which that end may be secured may be certainly known. To suppose that man is made in the image of God, that infinite possibilities are included in the purposes of his creation, that those possibilities are periled by sin, that redemption and

salvation are secured only through the death of Deity incarnate, that the benefits and blessings of atonement are conditioned upon man's voluntary acceptance—in a word, to suppose that man in his earthly life, by his own vibrating will, is appropriating or rejecting the provisions of an infinite atonement, and is thus balancing for himself two opposite eternities, and at the same time to suppose that certain knowledge in matters of such vast moment is unattainable, is to make suppositions which are manifestly vastly incongruous. So far forth as religion is a matter of feeling, it is subject to the fluctuations and uncertainties of human emotions; so far forth as it is a matter of faith it exposes us to the liabilities of our common humanity to believe in and trust what is not trustworthy; so far forth as it is a matter of reason, the limitations and imperfections of the human intellect necessitate rational grounds of doubt in respect to whatever is mere matter of deduction or inference; so far forth as religion is a science, like all other sciences its teachings lie all along close to the borders of the unknown.

But though man be under a necessity of ignorance in respect to some things, of doubt and uncertainty in respect to others, there are some things which he can certainly know; and it is fairly presumable that a competent portion of religious truth lies within the circle of the knowable. Much of

religious truth relates directly to personal experience, to matters cognizable in consciousness; and all of the Christian system stands inseparably connected with what more or less directly pertains to Christian experience. And this experience may be such as of itself to furnish adequate ground for a conviction of certainty not only in respect to the truth and reality of the experience itself, but also in respect to the whole system of truth with which that experience stands connected. The Gospel affirms that if a man will faithfully attend to its directions, observe its requirements, he shall experience a new creation, the eyes of his understanding will be enlightened, his conscience quickened, his heart purified, his will made free, his apprehensions of future ill shall give place to a peaceful trust in God, his fear of death to a hope of heaven. Millions have made the experiment, and have declared themselves satisfied with the result. The strength of convictions thus obtained has been evinced by a cheerful sacrifice of every opposing interest, by every form of suffering, deprivation, persecution, and martyrdom.

A sense of moral obligation is common to mankind, but the Christian believer has experienced in consciousness a quickening of this sense—such a quickening as is not referable to any natural cause, and is ever attended with a conviction that only the Divine Spirit is adequate to produce such a

result. All men have some apprehension of the sinfulness of sin and of the purity of that holiness which God requires in the character and conduct of his intelligent creatures, but he who has not "frustrated the grace of God" sees a darkness in depravity and a light in holiness which he is persuaded he could not see unless the Holy Spirit had "enlightened the eyes of his understanding." All men acknowledge that they "have done the things they ought not to have done, and have left undone the things they ought to have done;" but that "conviction for sin" which usually constitutes the conscious commencement of a Christian experience is clearly distinguishable as a somewhat higher and deeper than any sense of sin acquired by ordinary processes of thought and feeling. All men have some apprehension of future ill as consequent upon their evil deeds and resultant from their darkened minds and hardened hearts; but he who gives good heed to the words of God comes sooner or later to such "a fearful looking forward to the righteous judgments" of him whose infinite holiness must declare its opposition to sin and displeasure with sinners, as clearly evinces the presence, power, and offices of Him who convinces the world of "sin, righteousness, and judgment." All men have a conviction that there is mercy with God for the pardon of sin; but he who "hastens to lay hold upon the hope set before him in the

Gospel," who with eyes of faith and a trusting heart "beholds the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world," finds "a hope which is an anchor to his soul, sure and steadfast," comes to a knowledge not only of the possibility of pardon, but also of the actual forgiveness of his sins.

This persuasion that sin is forgiven, that the criminal before the law is exonerated from obligation to punishment, is accompanied by a conviction of change in other relations. He who had been a prodigal is now returned to his Father's house; he who had been a rebel is now restored to citizenship; he who had been a stranger, an alien, at best a servant, is now a child; and all this arises from, and is founded upon, the testimony of the Divine Spirit bearing witness with, and to, consciousness that its subject is a child of God. Also accompanying this same experience is a conscious change in character. The lover of sin has become a lover of holiness; the proud man a humble man; the worldly-minded and miserly, dead to the world and alive to whatever is excellent and of good report. The true, the beautiful, and the good have excellencies and attractions utterly unknown before. Anger, malice, revenge, envy, suspicion, inordinate self-esteem, selfishness, covetousness, an evil eye—the whole train of characteristics of a depraved nature become subject to conscience, are

divested of power to enslave, cease to be governing impulses, disappear and give place to opposite mental states. Love, good-will, benevolent affections, constitute the sole contents of consciousness. The whole heart and soul and mind and strength are in harmony with the law of love and the will of God. The man is a new creature; old things have passed away, all things have become new. He who consciously commits his whole being to the divine disposal, leaves himself and all his interests in the hands of God, and without mental reservation says "Thy will be done," is enabled to trust in the divine wisdom, power, and goodness in a sense and manner unknown to unregenerate minds. Conscious that his case is with God, he trusts confidently that all things work together for his good. He has, therefore, great peace of mind, nothing disturbs him; alike in adversity as in prosperity, he rejoices evermore, and in all things gives thanks to God. "Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." "Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me." Love of the law of God and faith in Christ allay the troubles of the heart in a manner and to an extent impossible by any other means. The securities of wealth, culture, good position, even faith in God—all, after all they can do to soothe a troubled spirit, to relieve the mind of its apprehensions of coming want and coming

sorrow, fail to give peace. Until Christian faith and trust ensue, the mind is as "the troubled sea whose waters can not rest;" but "being justified by faith through our Lord Jesus Christ, we have peace with God" and are at peace with all men; the whole mind is in harmony with the laws of our being; the agitations, anxieties, and disquietudes which make up so large a part of the contents of former consciousness are consciously absent, and their place is occupied with a fullness of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Some one has said: "It is the glory of our religion that it has comfort for you." The Spirit promised to believers in Christ is called, par excellence, "the Comforter," because it is his special office to solace the sorrowing, strengthen the weak, and bind up the broken-hearted.

Christianity proffers to its votaries a victory over the fear of death and a hope of heaven; and the faithful believer realizes in his experience that these promises are yea and amen. He who through all his life had been "subject to bondage through fear of death" now triumphantly exclaims: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"—"the sting of death is sin, but thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." He to whose apprehensions death had been "a leap into the dark" now confidently affirms that though he walk through the valley of the shadow of death

he will fear no ill, because "he knows that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." The faithful Christian, assured of the reality and certainty of his hopes, says calmly, soberly, confidently, "I have no fear of death. I know that if I die I shall thenceforth be blessed in the kingdom of my Father."

Now that such an experience as we have thus briefly indicated, an experience involving a conscious conviction of a supernatural agency producing in the mind a conviction for sin, a sense of pardon, a witness of adoption, an earnest of inheritance, a change in character, a change in intellectual apprehensions, emotions, desires, affections, tastes, propensities, inclinations, motives, purposes, volitions, a change in habits, societies, pleasures, pursuits, an entire change of the whole base line of life's battles, a peaceful trust in providence, a victory over the fear of death, and an assured hope of eternal life, that such an experience is an adequate basis for a conviction of certainty, not only that the experience is itself real and reliable, but also that the system of religion by and through which it was realized is also itself truthful, real, and therefore divine, must be obvious from the nature of the case. The supposition that millions of the best and greatest minds

known in human history should be deceived in such matters, and to such an extent as they must be if the Bible be not inspired, is a supposition that can not endure for a moment in the light of rational thought. The credibility of the witnesses is unimpeached and unimpeachable. The matters in hand are such as may be known. The witnesses have had ample opportunity for the acquisition of accurate knowledge. They have no interests inducing misrepresentation; they are persons of known and acknowledged integrity. They are as the sands of the seashore for number, no man can number them; but with one voice they testify, "What we have seen and known with confidence we tell." Christ Jesus hath power on earth to forgive sin. I was blind; he said, "Go wash." I went, and now behold I see. I was dead in trespasses and sin, but now "I live; and yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life I live, I live by faith on the Son of God."

CHAPTER VII.

SUMMARY OF ARGUMENTS.

1. THE Bible is the most ancient of books, and is entitled to respect for its antiquity; it is the only history that reaches back to the commencement of the race; it is as authoritative as any history of ancient times; many of its statements are confirmed by contemporary histories and pagan traditions; in no essential or important particular is it on good authority contradicted; it has been held in high esteem as a book of history by learned men in all the ages; and thousands, tens of thousands and millions of men have regarded it as a God-given guide to eternal life; it has, therefore, *prima facie* claims to the attention and respect of mankind.

2. The Bible is a book of morals; its system of ethics is more complete, comprehensive, intelligible, better adapted to man as he is, and to his circumstances as they are, more authoritative and sustained by higher sanctions than any other system of morals extant in the world; no crime

is countenanced; the highest virtues are commended; unbelievers themselves allow that if the precepts of the Bible were universally observed the highest interests of mankind would thereby be secured; as a code of morals, therefore, the Bible is entitled to be regarded as the Book of books.

3. As a system of religion its claims are pre eminent. (1.) If the writings of the Old and New Testaments do not contain divinely revealed and authoritative instructions in matters of religion, then there are no such instructions in the world. If God has not spoken here, then no man has ever heard his voice. If he has not here made known his will, then we know not what his mind concerning us may be; we know not who or what we are, whence we came, why we are here, whither we are going; existence is an enigma, life a mystery, and death a leap into darkness. No one at all conversant with Christianity will for a moment allow any other religion (as that of the false prophet, or any of the systems of pagan worship) to come into competition with it. In any case with us, with him who writes and with those who read this book, the choice is between the Christian religion and no religion at all. And yet such a choice is impossible to us, for man is naturally a religious being, and must have some system of religion. Were we to reject Christianity, we should

substitute something in its stead; most likely some invention of our own, sure to contain such an admixture of error as would prove fatal to all the purposes of a pure faith.

(2.) The Bible commends itself as a system of religion by the evident truth of all its fundamental doctrines. It postulates the eternal existence of an infinite Spirit, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, an intelligent, personal, First Cause, all-powerful, all-wise, boundless in benevolence, and every-where present; it affirms a moral government, extending to all intelligences endowed with free-will and the apprehensions of moral obligation; it asserts the universality of the law of love, supreme love to God, and good will to all that he has made; it assumes the free agency and moral responsibility of man; invites man to immortality; assures him that virtue will never fail of its reward, and that vice is invariably and everlastingly displeasing to God. These and kindred truths evident in themselves and sustained by all of which man has any knowledge, underlie all the contents of the Volume; they constitute its framework, its outline; all its teachings are in harmony with them, and are illustrative of them; the evident purpose of the whole Book is to explain, apply, and enforce these fundamental, most manifest, and unchangeable truths.

(3.) The Bible doctrines of sin are statements

of the well-known facts that all men violate obligation, and do so under the promptings of a nature inclined to evil; its doctrines of salvation are revelations of sole and adequate remedies for actually existing evils, revelations of competent means of escape from clearly apprehended impending perils. Man is guilty, atonement provides for pardon; he is polluted, regenerating grace creates a clean heart and renews a right spirit; he is ignorant, the Spirit teaches; he is weak, the Spirit strengthens; he is a child of sorrow, the Spirit is a comforter; he is mortal, the Gospel brings to light an immortality; his flesh slumbers in the grave, the resurrection trumpet wakes his dust to life.

(4.) The leading historical events recorded in the Bible are such as carry the evidence of their authenticity with them. The histories of the Jewish nation and of the Christian Church which compose so large a portion of the Sacred Writings are of such a nature, have reference to events of such a character, as that substantial untruthfulness is impossible; rhetorical embellishments there may be, inaccuracies in minor matters are quite probable, interpolations of what does not belong to the history are by no means impossible; but untruthfulness in respect to prominent events, important occurrences and the current and drift of the history can not in such a record be admitted for a moment as possible. Beyond question

Abraham was the father of the Jewish people; Moses was their lawgiver; David their greatest warrior; Solomon their wisest king; Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Daniel were among their most eminent prophets; Palestine was their country, Jerusalem their capital. They were in bondage in Egypt and in captivity in Babylon. They were monotheists and offered sacrifices to Jehovah; they observed one day in seven religiously, and all their successive generations lived in confident expectation of a coming Messiah, who should give enlargement to their kingdom and universal empire to their throne. Christ is the founder of the Christian religion; he was crucified under the authority of Pontius Pilate, was dead and buried; the preaching of his resurrection filled the world with believers in him as the Son of God and the Savior of men. Paul was sent to the Gentiles, among whom his ministry was eminently successful; learned Athenians listened to his discourses on the unity and spirituality of God; Jewish Rabbis yielded to his pleas for the common brotherhood of mankind, and multitudes joined in the confession: "There is one God, and Jesus Christ is his Son; all men are brethren; in Christ there is neither circumcision nor uncircumcision, Jew nor Greek, Barbarian nor Scythian." In a word, the events recorded in the Bible were events of actual history, since it is impossible that a record which should

falsify events of such a character should survive the age in which it was written.

4. In this summary we have spoken of the Bible as a history of ancient opinions and events, as a system of morals, and as a system of religion, affirming that in these respects it has claims on rational grounds superior to any other book extant among men. We come now to say that, as a revelation from God, asserting and enforcing doctrines whose rational evidence is above the powers of the human mind, it is fully and adequately authenticated. If man knows and is assured that there are three persons in one God; that in the person of Jesus Christ there were two natures, the human and the divine; that pardon is possible under the divine government only through an atonement of infinite merit; that the buried bodies of men will be raised from the dead, and that a day of judgment is appointed to be held at the end of the world, at which time eternal destinies will be awarded according to the deeds done in the body,—if man knows these things, they have been made known to him by a revelation from God. If he is assured of them, it is because he has indubitable evidence that God has declared them. The evidences authenticating the Bible as a revelation from God are: (1.) Miracles, or works wrought which no man can do except God be with him, and wrought for the declared purpose

of authenticating such a revelation; and (2.) Prophecies uttered at a time and in a manner clearly evincing such a knowledge of the future as no being but God possesses, and accurately fulfilled. That the miracles and prophecies of the Scriptures do furnish full, complete, and adequate evidence that God did at sundry times, and in divers manners, speak unto the fathers by the prophets, and did also speak unto us by his Son and by the apostles, needs not be argued here; we trust that what was said when this was the special subject of discussion is sufficient to make this abundantly evident.

5. The promulgation of Bible truths has always been attended with a success, and been productive of results, which demonstrate their truthfulness, their eminent excellence, and therefore their divine origin and authority. We have strongly insisted that such a book as the Bible could never be received as true unless it were true. But if we suppose it false and yet successful, since false in matters of such momentous interest, it must be in its effects injurious to a degree past computation. The Bible, if not true, must be greatly detrimental to human welfare, since its errors have respect to man's most momentous interests. But the Bible is not detrimental to human welfare, contrariwise it is highly promotive of man's greatest good; therefore, the Bible is not not true; it is rather yea, yea, and amen—a word of assurance—

verily, verily I say unto you, thus saith the Lord.

6. To the venerable antiquity, historical credibility, evident truth of fundamental principles, reasonableness of leading doctrines, excellency of moral precepts, miraculous occurrences, prophetic fulfillments, wonderful successes and beneficial results, may be added the unity of purpose and harmony of principles and methods pervading the entire book. Though composed by different authors, writing at times distant from each other by centuries, and under circumstances as different as occur in human history, the principles, purposes, and methods are the same in all from Genesis to Revelation. We may also add the peculiar characteristics of style. Though each author's production exhibits a style peculiar to itself, there is yet running through all the books of the Bible a characteristic simplicity, an absence of all attempts at embellishment, so appropriate to the sublimity and momentous import of the themes discussed. Again, we may add the correspondence of allusions and references to contemporary usages and customs, to times, to places, to men, and to historic events, with whatever is known from other histories and from traditions respecting the matters to which allusions may be made. In a word, the Bible commends itself to acceptance as credible because of what it is in itself as to most of its teachings. It

sustains its claim to inspiration by the indubitable proofs of miracles and prophecies. These commendations and claims are confirmed by the results of its promulgation, are corroborated by all testimonies bearing upon the case, from whatever source those testimonies come, and are demonstrated in the personal experience of all who submit to its claims.

CHAPTER VIII.

HISTORIC SKETCH.

THE proof that the Christian religion is the true religion, the evidences that what the Bible says God says, were manifest from the beginning. The apologists saw the proofs on the first announcement of the proposition to be proved. Opposition to Christianity has been substantially the same in all the ages. Different phases of the subject came to prominence in different times, and different authors have stated the same things in different ways; hence Christian defenses have seemed to vary with the times.

Christianity was preached first to the Jews; and the preaching was such as to show that Jesus of Nazareth was the Messiah whose coming was foretold in the Jewish Scriptures. The opposition of the Jews was a denial of this claim—an affirmation that Jesus Christ was not their promised Messiah; hence Christian apologetics, as far as the Jewish people were concerned, consisted chiefly in efforts to show the correspondence between the

prophecies of the Old Testament concerning the Messiah and the facts in the life of Christ—arguments to show that Jesus was indeed the Christ.

When the apostles and their successors turned to the Gentiles they had a different class of hearers, and met a different opposition. Polytheists believing, as they did, in lords many and gods many, in the fact of frequent revelations, and in the rewardableness of worship, had no interest in antagonizing Christianity except in what, to them, was the preposterousness of its claims. That the Christians' God was the only living and true God, that idols were nothing in the world; that the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures were revelations in words from the Eternal Source of all good; and that eternal life was conditioned in any sense upon faith in Jesus Christ, were, to Polytheists, claims to a superiority over their own religions that they could not admit. The defenses of Christianity, so far as they were concerned, were adapted to those polytheistic phases of thought which opposed the claims of the Gospel. Pantheism was in ancient times, as it is now, eminently metaphysical. Its opposition to Christianity, in common with all forms of philosophic opposition, consists in an attempt to show that faith and science, revelation and reason, are irreconcilable. This position of unbelief has constituted the chief standing objection to Christianity in all ages, and apologetics has, for

the most part, in all times, been an endeavor of the Christian mind to harmonize faith with science, religion with philosophy.

Occasionally ignorant and vulgar infidels have come to the surface, and for a time engaged attention to some extent by alleging that the Scriptures are self-contradictory; that Christianity encourages immoralities; that it teaches doctrines respecting God unworthy the divine character,—in a word, that the Christian religion is in every way a bad thing. These allegations are generally unworthy of a Christian's notice, but when answered the answer consists in showing that the objection misrepresents the case. The objector is either ignorant of the true import of Scripture, or he malignantly affirms what he knows is false. A proper understanding of the Word of God will, in all cases, dissipate objections of this kind.

We have endeavored to present, in an easily understood and concise form, the historical, internal, collateral, and experimental arguments for the inspiration of the Scriptures, and the consequent truth of the Christian religion. Apologetics must, from the nature of the case, assume one or the other, or several, or all of these forms of argument. We propose here to intimate briefly the lines of thought pursued by several apologists whose works have been, and are, deservedly held in high estimation among Christian believers.

Dr. Shedd, in his "History of Doctrines," says that "the earliest defenders of Christianity against heathen skepticism—Justin Martyr, Tatian, Athenagoras—laid much stress upon the transforming power of Christianity, upon the joyful deaths of Christians, and upon the greater safety in accepting Christianity even if it should prove to be a delusion." Tertullian, according to the same authority, though preferring to employ the exegetical, historical, and practical arguments, nevertheless appealed to the testimony of the reason in man as found in man's spontaneous expressions in his most serious and honest moments. Origen, Athanasius, and Augustine were, in their apologetic labors, mostly employed in stating and defending the true relations subsisting between faith and science, religion and philosophy, the supernatural and the natural. It is worthy of remark here, that there is discoverable an almost perfect parallelism between the controversies of those times and those of our own times. Then, as now, infidels claimed that man can not be required to believe what his reason does not comprehend; and all of them, both the ancients and the moderns, fail to distinguish between a reason why a thing is, and a reason why one may believe that it is.

During the scholastic age unbelief had a strong foothold in the Church itself, arising out of an effort on the part of theologians to find and

show the philosophy of religion. In an effort to show the reason of faith, the school-men, instead of strengthening it, as they intended, did much to undermine its very foundations. However, Anselm, Aquinas, and Bernard strongly maintained the ancient landmarks, and defended the faith in the same manner and spirit as did Augustine and others in more ancient times.

Infidelity, in its modern forms, may be said to have its commencement with English deism. Between the times of Lord Herbert (1748), who propounded a system of theism, or natural religion, rejecting every thing characteristic of Christianity, and the times of David Hume (1776), who proposed universal skepticism, every dogma of religion, both natural and revealed, was disputed. French infidelity and German rationalism followed in train, and from those times to the present Christian faith has measured swords with unbelief in every form of attack and defense known to polemical discussion.

If arguments can be of any avail with atheists, they may be found in Cudworth's "Intellectual System of the Universe," and also in Dr. Samuel Clarke's *a priori* arguments for the existence of God given in the Boylean Lectures in the years 1704 and 1705. Atheism is too absurd to be the settled conviction of any man, and though all men find difficulties in holding in mind a strong convic-

tion of the existence of a personal extra-mundane deity, yet but few are able even to persuade themselves that they do really doubt the being of a God. The most formidable antagonist of Christianity is rationalistic theism. It admits the being of God, moral distinctions, human responsibility, and a form of future retribution, but it entirely excludes the supernatural from human experience; denies, sometimes, the possibility, and always the probability, of a revelation; and affirms that the duty of man is sufficiently made known in nature and providence—or, in other words, that God has sufficiently manifested his will concerning man in his works and ways, so that it is antecedently improbable that he has ever revealed himself in words. It is to this aspect of unbelief that apologists mostly address themselves.

In the times of Joseph Butler (1752), English deism had made such progress, and taken such a hold upon the public mind, that he says, “It is come, I know not how, to be taken for granted by many persons, that Christianity is not so much as a subject of inquiry, but that it is now at length discovered to be fictitious. And accordingly they treat it as if, in the present age, this were an agreed point among all people of discernment, and nothing remained but to set it up as a principal subject of mirth and ridicule, as it were, by way of reprisal, for its having so long interrupted the

pleasures of the world." Not only were the doctrines characteristic of revealed religion rejected, but also those of natural religion as well; not only the inspiration of the Scriptures, the divinity of Christ, and pardon by propitiation, but also the doctrine of a future life and the probationary character of the life that now is. In rejecting Christianity infidels rejected all religion. Hence Bishop Butler, in his "Analogy of Religion, Natural and Revealed, to the Constitution and Course of Nature," adopted a line of thought specifically designed and adapted to answer objections. He considered the doctrines of natural and revealed religion, and showed from their analogy to what is known to be true, that it is not improbable that *they* also are true. For example: from the fact that suffering and misery do exist in this world, we may infer that it is not improbable that they exist in some other world; or, suppose an objector to the doctrine of future punishment should allege that that doctrine can not be true since God is infinitely good, Butler's line of thought would lead us to reply: God's goodness is not a bar to punishment in this life; therefore, it may not be in the life to come. The reply does not attempt to *prove* the doctrine of future punishment, but is an effectual answer to the objection alleged. Pursuing this line of thought, and examining all the leading doctrines of Christianity, the "Analogy" exhibits,

in a masterly way, the whole circle of Christian evidences, and has now, for more than a century, been justly considered a leading and standard work in Christian apologetics.

Paley's "*Horæ Paulinæ*" was published in 1790. In this work the coincidences between the Epistles of Paul and the Acts of the Apostles, especially such as clearly evince "undesignedness," are noticed, and shown to be such as exclude the supposition of art or contrivance, and thus furnish proof of the truth of these writings, and consequently the truth of Christianity. "The Epistles of Paul and the Acts of the Apostles mutually strengthen each other's credibility; and Mr. Paley has shown, in the clearest manner, how one borrows light from the other and how both conjunctively reflect the splendor of their united evidence on some of the principal facts and most important truths in the memoirs of the evangelists."

In 1794 Mr. Paley's "*Evidences of Christianity*" appeared. The line of thought pursued in this great work seems to us logically the most natural. Perhaps subsequent writers have improved the manner of presenting it; but the general drift, the classification, and arrangement of argument is certainly that which the nature of the subject most naturally demands. As the ground of faith in the doctrines by which Christianity is

distinguished from a rationalistic theism is eminently and solely a revelation from God; as the only reason for believing in the divine Sonship of Christ and its cognate doctrines is, that God has said, "This is my Son, hear ye him," it seems natural that the first demand is for the direct evidence that God has so said. The historical evidences which prove that miracles have been wrought and that prophecies have been uttered and fulfilled should be first exhibited.

Dr. Paley has adopted this method. By a masterly array of arguments he proves that the apostles were credible witnesses, that their testimony can not be gainsaid. Their lives of suffering and deaths by martyrdom prove that they were sincere. They had ample opportunity to know the facts to which they testify; they were men competent to form a correct judgment of those facts and to report them accurately. The accounts they gave have been correctly transmitted; the New Testament as we have it states accurately the facts the apostles witnessed; that is to say, the Book is genuine and authentic, and is therefore inspired. Having exhibited the historical evidences the internal are next examined. The Book is shown especially from the moral precepts it enjoins, indirectly from the doctrines it teaches, from its manner, method, style, and language, to be such a book as required divine inspiration for its production.

After this comes the collateral evidences found in the beneficial results of its publication and evinced by its wonderful success. Objections are answered and the conclusion follows.

Prior to the publication of Dr. Paley's "Evidences," but within the compass of his times, other apologetic works of great worth were issued from the English press. Jenyns wrote a book entitled "A View of the Internal Evidence of the Christian Religion," of which Dr. Paley says, "I should willingly, if the limits and nature of my work admitted of it, transcribe into this chapter the whole of what has been said upon the morality of the Gospel, by the author of 'A View of the Internal Evidence of Christianity,' because it perfectly agrees with my own opinion, and because it is impossible to say the same things so well." This work is wholly employed in stating and explaining the following proposition: "First, that there is now extant a book entitled the 'New Testament.' Secondly, that from this Book may be extracted a system of religion entirely new; both with regard to the object and the doctrines, not only infinitely superior to, but unlike every thing which had ever before entered into the mind of man. Thirdly, that from this Book may likewise be collected a system of ethics, in which every moral precept founded on reason is carried to a higher degree of purity and perfection than in any other of the

wisest philosophers of preceding ages; every moral precept founded on false principles is totally omitted, and many new precepts added peculiarly corresponding with the new objects of this religion. Lastly, that such a system of religion and morality could not possibly have been the work of any man, or set of men, much less of those obscure, ignorant, and illiterate persons who actually did discover and publish it to the world; and that therefore it must undoubtedly have been effected by the interposition of divine power; that is, that it must derive its origin from God."

Leslie's "Easy Method with the Deists" presents the historical evidences in a manner eminently meritorious, especially for its conciseness and simplicity. Lord Lyttleton considers "The conversion of St. Paul," and presents a most conclusive argument drawn from the fact of Paul's conversion in proof that "the Christian religion is a divine revelation."

Bishop Watson's "Apology for Christianity" is a reply to Gibbon. The latter, in his "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire," attempted to account for the success of Christianity by natural causes; and Watson's "Apology" is a reply, given in the form of letters addressed to the author of the "Decline and Fall." Addressing him he says, "I shall simply endeavor to show that the causes you produce are either inadequate to

the attainments of the end proposed, or that their efficiency, great as you imagine it, was derived from other principles than those you have thought proper to mention." The line of thought here, then, is simply a reply to an objection alleged against the collateral argument from success. The same author replies to Paine's "Age of Reason," in letters addressed to Thomas Paine, and entitled an "An Apology for the Bible." This is an answer to alleged objections against the internal evidences of Christianity. Paine either in ignorance of what Christianity really is, or in a malignant opposition to what is true and good, treated the Bible as he would a book that he knew was eminently bad. His objections are vulgar and vile interpretations. The Bishop assumed that Paine was sincere, and gave him credit for a "considerable share of energy of language and acuteness of investigation," and thus found opportunity for answering him in a style befitting the importance of the subject, the dignity of his office, and his own character as a man, a scholar, and a Christian.

The Rev. Richard Watson, in his "Theological Institutes," presents the "Evidences of the Divine Authority of the Holy Scriptures" in the order and manner most common and most natural. He almost entirely ignores intuition as a source of religious knowledge, and considers man as wholly

dependent upon revelation for whatever he knows of God, of duty, and of destiny. The origin of those religious truths found in the writings of ancient philosophers he refers to an original revelation transmitted by tradition and diffused by international agencies. To his thought, man, without a revelation from God in words, would have been but little more than a mere animal, well-nigh entirely destitute of knowledge on moral and religious subjects. Hence he attaches an importance to the historical evidences of religion incalculably great. He presents them first in order, and makes them primary in every sense. Paley, before him, had said that *he* did not deem it necessary to prove the necessity of a revelation, because no sensible man would claim that even with one, any man knew too much. But Mr. Watson elaborates the argument for the necessity of revelation at great length, and fully makes out a case much stronger than needful for the argument from necessity, which is, as he properly calls it, a presumptive argument for the fact. The first eight chapters of his work are occupied with this question, and the argument, in brief, is this: Man is a moral agent; this implies a known rule of conduct; this knowledge he is incompetent to discover, therefore it has been revealed. This reasoning, and the conclusion drawn from it, is confirmed by the condition as to the knowledge and practice of

morals and religion among the heathen; and further, the state of morals and religion among the heathen proves that the original revelation had become so far obscured, as that new and additional revelations were so needful that the necessities of the case constitute a fair presumption that such a revelation has been or will be given. Of course, the argument from miracles and prophecy is fully and strongly stated, and the whole question of the divine origin of Christianity is allowed to depend upon the conclusiveness of this historical argument, where, in the last resort, from the nature of the case, it must depend, whatever be the line of thought the apologist may choose to pursue. Mr. Watson does not, however, disparage internal evidences. Strongly insisting that they are secondary, not primary—since to suppose them primary and solely sufficient is to suppose that man knows, independently of revelation, what a revelation ought to be—he allows their full force when considered in their proper relation. We confess to an entire satisfaction with the argument from internal evidence as stated by Mr. Watson. A brief consideration of collateral evidences, with answers to miscellaneous objections, concludes the volume.

Dr. Archibald Alexander, Professor in Theological Seminary at Princeton, is the author of a most excellent work on the "Evidences of the

Authenticity, Inspiration, and Canonical Authority of the Holy Scriptures.” He shows the right use of reason in religion; maintains that “it is impossible to banish all religion from the world, and if it were possible, it would be the greatest calamity which could befall the human race. If Christianity be rejected, there is no other religion which can be substituted in its place—at least no other which will at all answer the purpose for which religion is desirable. Revelation is necessary to teach us how to worship God acceptably, the nature and certainty of a future state, and especially the method by which sinners may obtain salvation. There is nothing improbable or unreasonable in the idea of a revelation from God, and consequently nothing improbable or unreasonable in such a manifest divine interposition as may be necessary to establish a revelation.” These topics occupy five chapters of the book, after which comes the usual consideration of miracles and prophecies, then internal evidence, then the doctrine of inspiration, and lastly the canonical authority of the books of Scripture. This last topic receives comparatively more attention than is usual in works of the kind.

From the rise of English deism till recent times, the tendency in apologetics, so far as the method of discussion is concerned, has been to prove that God is the author of the Bible, and to infer that, therefore, the religion the Bible teaches

is true. In recent times, among authors still living or recently dead, the tendency has been to prove that the religion the Bible teaches is true, and to infer, therefore, that God is the author of the Bible. The arguments in either case are substantially the same; the one treats external evidence as primary and internal as secondary, and the other reverses the method.

Among recent authors, Dr. Hopkins, of Williams College, holds a prominent place. His treatise was first a course of lectures, prepared for and delivered before the Lowell Institute in Boston, and published in 1846. These lectures were extensively used as a text-book, and were, therefore, revised in 1863 and published in a form better suited to the requirements of the recitation room. The arguments adduced for "the divine origin of the Christian religion" are its analogy to the works and natural government of God; its coincidence with natural religion; its adaptation to the conscience as a perceiving power; the perfection of its morality; its adaptation as a quickening and guiding power to the intellect, the affections, the imagination, the conscience, and the will; and also as a restraining power—the experience of believers; its fitness and tendency to become universal; the fact that it has always been in the world—could not have been originated by man; the condition, character, and claims of Christ; miracles and

prophecies; the propagation of Christianity, and its effects and tendencies.

The late Dr. Thomson, a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, delivered a course of thirteen lectures before the Theological School of the Boston University, and afterward repeated them before the Evanston Biblical Institute, which, after his decease, were published under the title of "Evidences of Revealed Religion." These thirteen lectures are on the following topics, respectively: God, Spirituality, Immortality, Moral Government of God, Life a Probation, Future Punishment, Necessity of the Gospel, Advantages of the Gospel, Christ our Prophet, Christ our Priest, Christ our King, Miracles, Objections to the Cross: in each of which the doctrine under discussion is presented with such strength, perspicuity, simplicity, and beauty, that the reader is not only convinced, but he is also captivated. The work is a valuable contribution to apologetic literature. Dr. Cocker's recent work on Christian evidences is in the same line of thought; its title is, "Lectures on the Truth of the Christian Religion." He evidently has in mind clearly apprehended all the phases of modern rationalism, and aims his artillery directly at the enemy before him. The distinct apprehension of the questions at issue, especially in their most recent forms, the logical power and skill, and the scholarly

attainments evinced by these lectures, make the volume indispensable to the student of the apologetics of our times.

The science of Christian evidences and Biblical criticism interpenetrate at many points; the former is incomplete without the latter; Horne's "Introduction" and Angus's "Hand-book" are classics in Biblical criticism; Dr. Nast's "Introduction" has special reference to the questions of genuineness and authenticity, and is itself a most triumphant negative to all the assumptions of modern rationalism affecting the question of the inspiration and divine authority of the Holy Scriptures.

BOOK SECOND.



THEOLOGY PROPER.

CHAPTER I.

THE BEING OF GOD.

I. THE ORIGIN OF THE IDEA OF GOD.

IF to any one the question were proposed, How came you in possession of the idea of God? he would probably reply, I can not tell; I must have received the idea earlier than I can remember; probably it arose in my mind on some occasion of instruction from my mother. If he were asked by what process the embryonic idea of childhood had been developed, and more perfect apprehensions obtained, he would most likely say, I can not tell precisely; probably my present idea of God has arisen partly by absorption of the surface ideas of public opinion, partly from reading, conversation, discussion, hearing sermons and lectures, and from private meditations; an accurate account of the genesis and growth of the idea I can not give; I only know that I now have, and from my earliest recollections I have had, some idea of God.

Among the theories advanced by thinkers and

writers on this subject, the most prominent are these: first, the idea of God is an intuition; second, it is an inference from reasoning; third, it is from revelation transmitted by tradition.

(1.) "The word intuition is a convenient term for stating the fact that the mind on certain occasions from its own inherent energy gives rise to certain thoughts." By an accommodation of language such thoughts are themselves called intuitions; the power the mind has of giving rise to such thoughts is called the intuitive faculty. The same idea is sometimes expressed by the terms, the nature, or the constitution of the mind; that is to say, the mind is conceived of as a somewhat whose nature is to give rise to thoughts when the proper occasion occurs. The same thing is intended when it is said of a class of ideas that they are innate, not that ideas are in the minds of infants at birth, but that ideas are born in the mind when the conditions of their birth occur.

Now, it must be manifest that an inquiry after the genesis of thought must in all cases in the last resort be referred to the nature of mind itself; for example, in any instance of perception, if we inquire, How came the mind in possession of the idea, suppose of color, as white or black? the usual answer is, By the sense of sight; but this answer is not complete, for it may still be inquired, How does sight give such ideas? and the answer

must be, It is of the nature of mind to be so impressed when the organs of sight are brought into exercise.

Since these things are thus, any discussion of the origin of ideas must consist first, in a specification of the circumstances which constitute the occasion of their occurrence; and second, in a reference of the fact of their arising on said occasions to the nature of mind itself.

But it is common for psychologists, in classifying thoughts on the basis of their origin, to refer all ideas of the qualities of matter to perception; of the operations of mind, to self-consciousness or the inner sense; of relations, to judgment; of inferences, to the logical faculty, sometimes called the understanding; of conceptions of the ideal, to imagination; and all necessary ideas and truths, called innate ideas and first truths, to intuition. This faculty is by some called the reason; by others, original suggestion; by still others, original conception; all meaning one and the same thing—namely, the nature and constitution of the mind itself.

When, therefore, it is said that the ideas of time, space, substance, beauty, sublimity, moral obligation, and the idea of God are intuitions, or ideas of the reason, the most intelligent interpretation of such language is, that it is intended to affirm that these ideas, on the occurrence of the

appropriate occasions, arise in the mind, because it is of the nature and constitution of the mind to give rise to such thoughts on such occasions. For example: by sensation and perception the qualities of the material world are cognized. Now, it is unthinkable that qualities should inhere in nothing; we can not originally conceive of, round or square, black or white, except as we concretely conceive of a somewhat that possesses these qualities: hence the idea of substance; this is an intuition. By the same necessity of thought, we must conceive of substance as somewhere; we can not think of it as nowhere; hence the intuition of space.

The affirmation that the idea of God is intuitive, is an affirmation that the idea arises in the mind precisely in the same way as do ideas of time, space, substance, and all others of that class of thoughts.

That this affirmation is true it would seem is sufficiently evident from the well-known laws of thought. Let us take one of the most common and most simple of all the phenomena of mind, and analyze it, and see whether this be so. A book is presented to me. I see it, I take it; the presentation and reception have, through the organs of sense, made an impression upon my mind. I perceive the book. Now, what are the contents of consciousness in this act of perception? First,

self, or being impressed; second, the sensation, or impression made; third, the organism through which it was made; and fourth, the book, or external cause of the impression. What knowledge of the book is thereby obtained? First, its qualities, as color, temperature, weight, form, magnitude, etc.; second, substance, in which these qualities inhere; third, space, in which this substance is contained; fourth, the now, or time in which the book is presented and perceived; and fifth, cause and effect, or the presentation of the book as the necessary antecedent to this perception. These apprehensions are all obviously necessary and instantaneous, but there are others necessarily inhering in the act of perception and underlying it, and therefore actually present to thought and potentially a part of the mind's possessions. The book is perceived to be limited or finite, but space must be conceived as unlimited or infinite; the book is a contingency—a something that might not have been; space is a necessity—something that could not not be. We have, then, the idea of infinite and necessary being. But more, the book was a cause, and a cause by an intelligent adaptation of means to an end, showing itself to be also an effect requiring an antecedent cause. Again, an infinite series of second causes is not conceivable; therefore, the perception necessitates the apprehension of first cause. We have, then, in the

simplest possible process of thought, not only self and the material world, but also infinite and necessary being and intelligent first cause, and these are fundamental elements of the idea of God.

Again, man comes into being in a condition of absolute dependence, and some apprehensions of this dependence must, from the nature of the case, be among the earliest ideas in consciousness. Arising out of this sense of dependence, inseparably connected with it, is a sense of obligation. Obligation is an apprehension not only of somewhat as due, but also of somewhat as due to some one, and that one him upon whom we are dependent. In a word, it would seem evident from the obvious facts of the case, that the sense of dependence and obligation, of which all men are apprehensive from the earliest moments of conscious thought, are by them intuitively referred to an infinite intelligent first cause.

We next inquire, By what process does this idea of God thus potentially present in the mind become obvious to consciousness, and the conviction respecting the divine existence become a conviction of certainty? Evidently by the same process as that by which any other thought is developed from its first budding to completeness or perfection—namely, the educational process, by which mind advances from infancy to maturity; by which knowledge is developed from crude, half-formed thoughts

and indistinct impressions, to clear apprehensions; by which convictions change from doubts, uncertainties, partial beliefs, to firm faith and positive knowledge. If the educational process be wanting, the mind remains in its infantile condition; and it is not strange that, in comparison with the results of subsequent development (as is the case with those who are both deaf and blind, whose education was commenced in their maturer years), this condition seems to the individual himself as not distinguishable from absolute ignorance.

It is next to impossible for mind, in its normal condition, to remain in this world of ours and come in contact with men and things, as every mind must, more or less, in the continuous every-day experience of this our earthly life, without some degree of development. It is next to impossible that thought should be employed in any form about the things that are, where there are so many manifestations of infinite skill, power, and wisdom—so frequent occasions for the apprehension of cause and effect, and the consequent necessity of first cause—without some occasions for the development of the intuitive idea of God—occasions which the mind must, from the necessities of its nature, seize upon and employ for the acquisition of actual and positive knowledge.

That the doctrine of the divine existence is of the nature of a first truth seems a fair inference

from the obvious fact that the idea of God is fundamental to all morals and religion. If a human being be utterly destitute of all ideas of God, it is not conceivable that he should be a subject of moral government. Though he might, in a slight degree, be susceptible of a sense of obligation to his fellow-men, such as gratitude for benefits received, and of justice requiring the fulfillment of his contracts, yet, as such obligations are void of all sanctions beyond the superior might of those to whom they are due, they must be nothing more than a very imperfect basis of a very limited system of morals—a system sustained only by the false maxim that might gives right, and not at all a government of moral beings by moral agencies. Of course, in such a case, religion would be an unknown and an impossible thing. That the ultimate basis of moral obligation—the *sine qua non* of all morals and religion—should be any thing less than a first truth—should be any thing dependent upon the contingencies of education—can not be reasonably admitted. That which is right and wrong; that which in absolute truth obligates the conscience; that upon which character and destiny depends must, in the last analysis, be something in the constitution of the mind itself, not an accident of the mind's surroundings—not a contingency in the events of its history.

The idea of God is fundamental to all moral

truths; therefore, the power to apprehend this idea must be a natural endowment conditioned only upon such occasions as are common to the race in its normal condition. That is to say, the idea is intuitive, innate—a product of the reason, of that faculty that constitutes man a rational being.

This view of the subject is fully sustained by the testimony of Paul given in the Epistle to the Romans. “That which may be known of God is manifest in them; for the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead.” The material world, “the things that are made,” necessarily observed, necessarily subjects of thought, are so correlated to the constitution of mind that “the invisible things of him, even his eternal power and Godhead, that which may be known of him, are manifest in them;” are revealed to consciousness by the necessary laws of thought.

The affirmation that the idea of God is necessary, is an affirmation that it is universal. But it is alleged that the idea is not universal, and that therefore the affirmation that it is necessary is an assumption. It is said that persons born blind and deaf aver that previous to instruction they were entirely destitute of all ideas of God; and that navigators have found whole tribes of

men in the same condition of total ignorance. Suppose the persons alluded to are as ignorant as they are said to be; does it therefore follow that the mass of mankind in the normal condition of human life are also thus ignorant? As well might it be said that, because some men are born blind, it is not true that mankind generally are endowed with the sense of sight. "Should a tribe of idiots be discovered it would not prove that reason is not an attribute of our nature." Infanticide, though general, or in a given community even universal, does not prove that paternal affection is not an implanted principle in human nature. But it is more than probable that the persons alluded to are not as ignorant as is alleged. The undeveloped embryonic idea in the mind of a child or of a person of mature years, wholly uneducated, when held in comparison with educated thought very naturally appears very like to a nullity. Navigators have not the ability to determine accurately what may be the mental status of tribes, of whose language they are ignorant and among whom they remain but for a brief period. Missionaries have sometimes affirmed that the people among whom they have labored evince no intelligent ideas of the divine existence. This may be ascribed partly to the difficulties of communication, and partly to the comparison of what pagans do evince with the more perfect ideas of

Christian culture. But again, it is said, that here and there throughout the world individuals, and in some localities, whole nations of cultured men are atheists or pantheists; and pagans generally are polytheists and idolaters, all of which seems inconsistent with the doctrines that the idea of God is an intuition. We reply, an affirmation or denial in respect to the divine existence and any form of worship pure or corrupt, true or false, is so far from being evidence of the non-existence of the idea of God, that it is exponential of its actual presence. How the mind of man can corrupt the truth; how they who "have a knowledge of God" can, not desiring to retain that knowledge, become darkened in their understanding, "hold the truth in unrighteousness and worship the creature more than the Creator," is another question to be considered in another connection.

The idea that the doctrine of God is a product of reasoning, if taken in the sense that a person totally destitute of the idea can by some process of reasoning come to a discovery of the thought, requires only a brief refutation. The condition of ignorance and infantile development, implied in a total destitution of this fundamental truth, is a condition in which the logical faculty besides being itself extremely feeble finds but very limited employment; and if a mind in such a condition were capable of an argument, the

terms necessary for its construction are the very things that are wanting.

The truth is, that by reasoning processes we unfold and extend our apprehensions of God; we come to a more perfect knowledge of his character and of the nature of his attributes. The mind's connection with the material world furnishes the occasion on which intuition gives the elements of knowledge and the reasoning faculty elaborates those elements into the formulas of scientific thought.

The theory that all religious truth was originally given by direct revelation, and has been transmitted from generation to generation by tradition, deserves more extended discussion. This theory has this advantage, that it seems most in harmony with the facts of history.

God made known his will in words to the first pair; he held frequent intercourse with the patriarchs of antediluvian times; "spake at sundry times and in diverse manners unto the fathers by the prophets;" and in the fullness of time he manifested himself in the person of his Son, and completed the dispensations of direct revelations through the teachings of inspired apostles. Methuselah was contemporary with Adam and Noah. The oracles of God were committed to the family of Abraham, and through them by international communications, by commerce, by the travels of

adventurers, by the researches of scholars, by emigrations and immigrations, by captivities, by all the means by which knowledge is diffused, the religion of the only living and true God was made known more or less to all the nations of the earth.

Moreover the correctness of religious opinions and the purity of morals and religion have always been in exact proportion to the degree and extent to which these revelations have been respected and observed; and in the same degree and to the same extent to which mankind have gone astray from these centers of religious knowledge, religion has become corrupted and morals have been debased.

Neither history nor tradition gives any intimations of a time when the whole world was destitute of the knowledge of God, nor has it ever been known that any people or any individuals utterly ignorant have of themselves without instruction discovered the doctrine of a divine existence.

These things are urged, not without some appearance of logical accuracy, as determinative proofs that the mind of man without revelation is not capable of any religious knowledge. We reply, perfect ignorance and imperfect knowledge are two very different states of mind. That the unaided reason, merely in the light of nature and providence, is incompetent to discover and unfold those degrees of religious knowledge required for

the higher forms of morals and religion, for those attainments in virtue and true excellence for which the benevolence of God has abundantly provided and to which he has invited man in his earthly life, we have fully asserted and earnestly maintained in our argument for the necessity of a revelation. But we as fully assert, and as earnestly insist upon it, that notwithstanding the weakness and corruption of human reason—notwithstanding the many evidences of the necessity of a revelation found in the errors and immoralities of the pagan world—to some extent the idea of God is a spontaneity; an adequate basis for moral responsibility is laid in the constitution of the mind itself; so that, as says St. Paul, “those who have not the written law are a law unto themselves,” “so that they are without excuse” for their idolatries and moral degradations; “what may be known of God is so manifest in them that the wrath of God is justly revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness.”

We conclude, therefore, that man is such by creation in nature and constitution that, circumstanced as he is in his earthly existence, there arises necessarily in his mind, among the earliest convictions of his conscious intelligence, a sense of dependence and of obligation; that by the natural processes of thought he early comes to an

apprehension of unlimited necessary being, which is also first cause; that in the objects above, beneath, and around him. in the material world, in the things about which his thoughts are constantly employed, there are every-where such and so many evidences of power and intelligent design, that he very readily recognizes the existence of a supersensuous, extramundane, all-powerful, infinitely wise Person, who is the author of his being and the source of his blessings, upon whom he is dependent for all that he is or hopes, and to whom he is under obligations of gratitude, reverence, and obedience; that the necessary laws of thought are so correlated to the manifestations of God in his works and ways in nature and providence, that a system of pure theism is possible, and that mankind generally are under obligations to comply with the requirements of such a system—that is, they are without excuse for any failures in what might be justly required of those having such a knowledge of God and of man's relations to his Maker; that such a system of mere theism, even in its highest possible forms, is inadequate for the higher purposes of human life, and hence the necessity and presumption of a revelation of God's will in words; that such a revelation is contained in the writings of the sacred Scriptures, that by them "the man of God is thoroughly furnished unto every good word and work," and that "by taking heed thereto as

unto a light shining in a dark place," man may attain unto the highest purpose of his earthly existence, may secure the ultimate end of his creation—his own greatest good and the highest glory of his Creator.

2. THE BIBLE IDEA OF GOD.

Manifestly any apprehension of the infinite possible to a finite mind must be incomplete—none but the infinite can fully comprehend the infinite.

Some have, therefore, affirmed that God is unknowable—that all human apprehensions of the divine are only negations; that we can only think what God is not—can not think what he is; that he is an object of faith, but in no good sense an object of knowledge. These views are sustained by the speculations of great men—some of them Christian believers—but the common sense of mankind, even when it can not answer the argument, promptly rejects the conclusion.

God is truly inconceivable, if the term conception be taken in the sense of forming an image by the imagination of the thing conceived; but he is not, therefore, unthinkable either in the sense that what we think him is self-contradictory, or in the sense that nothing of what he is can be an object of certain knowledge. God can not be defined in the sense of setting boundaries or limits to that which is defined; but he may be pointed out or described

as being or possessing that which distinguishes him from that which he is not. It is not true that every conception which is not exhaustive is therefore a negation. I have not an exhaustive conception of the magnitude of the ocean, or of the distance of the sun; it does not therefore follow that my apprehensions of that magnitude, or that distance, are negations, nullities, that they are objects of faith but not of knowledge; on the contrary, my knowledge of these things as far as it goes is positive knowledge, and as reliable as my knowledge of any thing about which my thoughts are employed. I may know the infinite as far forth as I know it at all, as positively as I know the finite. I say to myself, God is a spirit; or, God is eternal: I know positively that I say something, and that what I say is true, but I do not exhaustively know what I say—that is, I do not fully understand all that is expressed by the words I use. In like manner when I say God is every-where present, is all-powerful, is infinitely good, is first cause, upholds all things by the word of his power, my conceptions are none of them exhaustive, but all are positive.

It may, for aught I know, be true that what the philosophers have been pleased to call the absolute and the infinite is, *as such*, unreveala-ble; yea, unknowing and unknown—incapable of becoming a cause, and is of necessity sole, absolute

existence. It is evidently true that in the nature of the Divine Being it is impossible that the infinite God should come out of his own absolute eternity except as a person; but for personality, and perhaps for a trinity in personality, creation, and the existence of any thing that is not God, were an impossibility. It is certain that human knowledge of God is derived not immediately from, by, or through the absolute and the infinite, as such, but mediately from, by, and through the works and providence of God, and more perfectly by "God manifest in the flesh." "No man knoweth the Father but the Son and he to whom the Son hath revealed him."

The writers of the Scriptures every-where postulate the being of God and some knowledge of his nature and attributes, both in their own minds and in the minds of those to whom their writings are addressed. They recognize clearly the impossibility of an exhaustive conception, but as clearly assume the actual existence of some degree of positive knowledge. By the significant names by which they designate him, by the actions they represent him as performing, and by the attributes they ascribe to him, it is evident that they assume that he is, and is known to be, a "Spirit, infinite, eternal, and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth:" that he is, and is known to be, the "one living and

true God, without body or parts; of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things visible and invisible:" "the Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and upon children's children unto the third and to the fourth generation:" "God is a Spirit, the King eternal, immortal, invisible; the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning: he is the fountain of life; he only hath immortality; by him were all things created which are in heaven and in earth, whether they are visible or invisible; by him all things consist; he upholds all things by the word of his power; he fills heaven and earth with his presence; all things are naked and open before the eyes of him with whom we have to do; the heavens, even the heaven of heavens, are his, and all the parts of them; the earth is his, and the fullness thereof, the world and they that dwell therein: he doeth according to his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; he numbers the hairs of our head, and without him a sparrow shall not fall on the ground. The Lord God of hosts is holy, holy, holy—a God of truth, and in whom is no iniquity—of purer eyes

than to behold iniquity. The Judge of the whole earth doeth right; clouds and darkness are round about him, but judgment and justice are the habitation of his throne. Oh the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of God! His judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out; he is good, and his mercy endureth forever; his tender mercy is over all his works. God is rich in mercy for his great love wherewith he loved us; even when we were dead in sins he quickened us together with Christ; God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; God hath given to us eternal life, and that life is in his Son."

Science furnishes no formulas equal to these presentations of the Bible, either in perspicuity, strength, or sublimity. From those most approved, however, the following may be quoted: "By the word God we mean a being of infinite wisdom, goodness, and power; the Creator and Governor of all things, to whom the great attributes of eternity and independency, omniscience and immensity, perfect holiness and purity, perfect justice and veracity, complete happiness, glorious majesty, and supreme right of dominion belong, and to whom the highest veneration and most profound submission and obedience are due." "God is eternal and infinite, omnipotent and omniscient; he endures from eternity to eternity, and is present from

infinity to infinity. He governs all things that exist, and knows all things that are to be known. He is not eternity or infinity, but is eternal and infinite; he is not duration or space, but he endures and is present—he endures always and is present every-where. He is omnipotent, not virtually but substantially.” “God is self-existent, uncaused, independent, necessarily existent, self-active, living, and intelligent.”

3. PROOFS OF THE DIVINE EXISTENCE.

The sacred writers claim to speak by divine authority. They profess to communicate what had been given them by a divine inspiration. They authenticate their mission by signs and wonders wrought in attestation of their authority. They do not, therefore, attempt to prove by argument the truth of the doctrines they teach. Having furnished adequate evidence that their “thus saith the Lord” is yea and amen, they leave their readers in the exercise of free will to accept or reject their testimony. It is, moreover, eminently manifest that when they state, or in any way refer or allude to the divine existence, or when they state or in any way attempt to describe the nature and attributes of God, they speak as men always do when they have a conscious or unconscious conviction that what they say is so evident in itself as that to be received and admitted as truth

it needs only to be stated. Nowhere in the Scriptures have the sacred writers attempted an argument in proof of the divine existence. As in the first verse of the Bible—"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth"—so every-where they speak of God as a being whose existence and character are well known and acknowledged. Accordant with this manner of treating the subject, we have, in this treatise, maintained that the doctrine of God is a first truth—universal and necessary. The doctrine of the divine existence, therefore, does not stand so related to reasoning as that the original first conviction of its truth depends in any sense upon the conclusiveness of argument. The function of argumentation in this case is to develop the intuitive thought, to confirm and strengthen the original conviction, to illustrate it; and so exhibit its relations as to make it more and more applicable to practical and experimental purposes. A due consideration of those evidences of the divine existence, and the illustrations of the divine character found in consciousness and of those every-where exhibited in the material world and in the events of history, tends to lead thought onward in perpetual progress toward perfect knowledge, to strengthen the sanctions of morals and religion, and to intensify devotion. It is a means of acquiring, in part, that knowledge of God which is the life of the soul, the essential element of

spiritual life—"to know God and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent, this is eternal life." "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Words are channels of thought, means of communicating ideas; ideas of God are communicated by his works, his ways, and his word—by nature, providence, and revelation. From the careful study and consequent clear apprehension of these things as instruments employed by the agency of the Divine Spirit religion receives its chief support.

Arguments adduced in support of the doctrine of an extramundane, personal God, the creator, preserver, and governor of the world, when they assume the logical form are designed to show that the facts of consciousness and the facts of our earthly condition necessitate the assumption of the existence of such a Being. They may be and are classified as ontological, cosmological, teleological, and moral.

(1.) The ontological argument, though capable of being stated in different forms, is one—an *a priori* argument from the idea of necessary being, and in brief is this: I have an idea of the most perfect being possible; but a being whose existence is contingent is not as perfect as one whose existence is necessary; therefore, the being of whom I have this idea is a being whose

existence is necessary, or who does necessarily exist. Again, a being whose existence is imaginary is not as perfect as one whose existence is actual; therefore, this being does actually exist. In short, because the idea of the most perfect being possible has existence, therefore there is a being whose existence is actual and necessary.

The obvious reply or objection to this argument is, that the existence of an idea of a thing does not prove the actual existence of the thing itself. To this it is answered, the idea of necessary being is *sui generis*, there is nothing that is analogous, the term has no analogue. The imagination may conceive innumerable ideals which have no real existences corresponding: but this one idea of necessary being is not of that category; it is peculiar to itself, and is such that its existence being admitted the existence of its antitype must also be admitted. To conceive of a triangle is to conceive of a figure not only having three sides but also three angles, the sum of which is equal to two right angles; in like manner to conceive of the most perfect being possible is to conceive of a being whose existence is real and necessary.

If this be an argument then all arguments are not syllogistic. Its defect may not be precisely pointed out; but its conclusiveness, if it be conclusive, is not obvious; probably most minds will reject it as a sophism. Saying that this figure

has three sides, therefore it has three angles, is more of the nature of a truism than of an argument; it is simply saying that a thing is what it is. The same may be true in respect to the idea of the most perfect being possible; clearly if such a being does exist his existence is necessary, and to admit the actual existence of the idea seems to be an admission of the existence of its corresponding reality.

(2.) The cosmological argument is an argument from the existence of the universe regarded as an effect, which must have a cause external to itself, and ultimately necessitates the conception and actual existence of a first cause. Every one is conscious of self and not self; all have intuitive knowledge of personal existence and the real existence of the material world. Somewhat exists, and must have always existed, or there was a time when there was nothing, and consequently a time when out of nothing something began to be; but since it is impossible that nothing should beget something, it must be certain that something has existed always. That somewhat which has existed always, or whose existence is eternal, must be also necessarily existent; for if not so, then it is contingent: but a contingent existence is one which depends upon something else and can not be till that somewhat else upon which it depends shall determine its existence; this is to suppose a

time when it did not exist, which is contrary to what is proved above, therefore there is an eternal, necessarily existing, somewhat. By a perfectly similar process it may be shown that the necessary eternal somewhat is also self-existent, independent, uncaused; and when it shall be shown that this same is also intelligent, and therefore a person, the existence of the Being revealed in the Bible as God, the creator, preserver, and governor of all things is demonstrated.

The only possible method of avoiding this conclusion is to deny the doctrine of causation. Philosophical speculation has had the boldness to do this. It is said that all that man knows of what is commonly called cause and effect, is stated antecedency; he knows by observation that certain phenomena called effects uniformly follow certain other phenomena called causes; but he does not and can not know that any thing in the antecedent produced, or was in any way essential to the production of the so-called effect. Cause as such, it is said, is not cognizable by any power or susceptibility of the human mind; we can not see it, it is not revealed to any sense, we do not know that it exists. It is obvious that this is the bold unwarranted, assumption of positivism, namely, that man knows nothing but what he cognizes by the senses; it is an utter denial of the possibility of a knowledge of the supersensuous, an assumption flatly contradicted by the common

sense of mankind. Every man is as perfectly satisfied that he cognizes rational conceptions as he is that he cognizes sensible representations; he knows as well that there is substance and space as he does that there are qualities inhering in substance and occupying space, he knows time as he knows succession, and in the same way he knows cause as well as he knows effect.

That the idea of cause and effect is not identical with the idea of stated antecedency and uniform succession is evident; for there is no more uniform succession than that of day and night, yet no man ever supposed that day was the cause of night, or night the cause of day. A cause has been defined to be a subject by whose existence another subject comes into existence, or may, without contradiction, be supposed to come into existence. The word power indicates that in a cause by whose existence the effect comes into existence, or without contradiction may be supposed to come into existence. The absence of power in a subject to be otherwise than it is, is our idea of necessity. Now, all these terms—cause, effect, power, necessity—represent clearly conceived apprehensions of the common intelligence, and no man can make void in his own mind the conviction that they represent really existing things; the denial of causation is plainly contradicted by the common sense of mankind.

The personality of God is most conveniently made manifest by the teleological argument. This is an argument from the evidences or marks of design every-where seen in the material world. The argument as stated by Paley has never been answered and ought to be considered unanswerable. It is in brief this: If I pick up a stone and ask myself, How came it here? it is conceivably possible that I might be satisfied to answer myself by saying, For aught that I know it has been what it is and where it is forever. But, if I take into my hands a watch, and have a knowledge of it—of its parts, of its whole, the relations of its parts to each other, and the adaptation of the whole to the measurement of time—it is impossible that I should give the same answer to the question of its origin as in the case of the stone. The result would be the same though there should be discovered in the watch parts that were useless, or parts even defective, or in derangement—parts whose presence was detrimental to the ultimate purpose; or should there be connected with the watch an apparatus by which other watches were manufactured, and should it be evident that this watch had itself been manufactured by the action of some other older watch, the conclusion that this machinery had been originally contrived by some intelligent person would not thereby be made void, but would rather be confirmed. In a word, whenever contrivance is

discovered, there is indubitable evidence of a contriver; design necessitates the recognition of a designer. The multiplication of secondary causes, the complication of machinery, never can diminish, but must always increase, the strength of the conviction that that which exhibits adaptation of means to an end must have come to be what it is by the intentions of some intelligent first cause.

Let it be observed that all questions of science, of knowledge, are in the last resort this question of thought, How am I to think it? If, on investigation, any matter is to me such that I must think it thus and thus, that with me is an end of the case. If, on an investigation of the mechanism of the human eye, of the laws of light, of the phenomena of seeing, of the method by which, through the instrumentality of the organs of sight, mind is impressed and color is perceived, it is impossible for me to think that such a thing as the human eye could come to be what it is by any chance collocations and combinations of the ultimate molecules of matter or by any other means than by the intentional device of some designing mind, that with me must be an end of the matter. If I must think that such a thing as the human eye could not be without the agency of an intelligent first cause, then I must believe in the existence of such a cause. To say that the eye was not made to see, but that it sees because it can

see, because it chanced to be such that sight became a possibility, is to say what the common sense of mankind must reject.

The same remark applies to every part of the human body and to the physical constitution of man considered as a whole; man "fearfully and wonderfully made," evinces unlimited skill and intelligence in his Maker. The argument—I am, therefore God is,—illustrated by a scientific knowledge of what I am, becomes resistless. And it manifestly avails nothing to say that man is born and grows. Who made him to be born as he is, and to grow as he does? Propagation itself evinces design; and no matter how numerous the generations, or how far remote the first parentage, design is not accounted for except there be back of the whole somewhere a designing mind.

Illustrations of the teleological argument may be found in all departments of natural science, in anatomy, physiology, botany, natural philosophy, geology, and astronomy. Every-where, in all the works of God, design is manifest, and so manifest as to necessitate the conception of a designer. The argument is conclusive when a single case is presented. The construction of the eye is so adapted to the laws of light, to the purposes of vision and perception that it is impossible to apprehend that construction with its relations, and not be conscious of a conviction that some designing mind

planned it; that the eye was brought into existence and made to be what it is by the agency of some intelligent person who antecedently intended to bring into existence and set in operation this very thing. The only contrary conclusion is, that the eye might come to be what it is and serve the purpose it does by chance collocations and combinations of material particles, which is a supposition not tenable in thought. What may be thus said of the eye may be said of every part and of the whole of the entire animal kingdom. The organs of digestion, circulation, respiration, reproduction, all are wisely, wonderfully adapted to the purposes they serve; so are the bones, the muscles, the flesh, the skin, and specially the nerves, with their wondrous sensitiveness and close connection with mind. The more scientific and exhaustive the knowledge of the animal and vegetable kingdoms, the more comprehensive the knowledge of geography, geology, and astronomy, the more impressive is the argument; and the conviction that the first cause is the intentional author of all that appears in the natural world is by this more perfect knowledge more deeply seated and firmly fixed in the mind. But scholarly attainments in natural science are not indispensable to the conclusiveness of the argument; the common sense is adequate to all logical demands in the case. All men know that the eye was made for

seeing, the ear for hearing, the hand for handling, and the man for labor, rest, enjoyment, devotion, duty, and destiny. They know that birds are fitted for life and motion in the air; fishes for the sea; and that similar adjustments and adaptations are in all things with which man is conversant. The adaptations of the soil and the vicissitudes of the seasons to the production of vegetation; the transmutations of inorganic matter by vegetables to such conditions as are necessary for the food of animals; the phenomena of every-day common life, the rising and setting sun; the overhanging cloud, the descending rain, the all-surrounding air, the labors of the day-time, and the slumbers of the night, all, all with which man is in any way connected, or to which he is in any way related, evince an overruling power which, under the dictation of an antecedent intention, has brought things to be what and when and where they are.

THE MORAL ARGUMENT.

As the cosmological argument is from the existence of matter, so is the moral from the existence of mind. All men are conscious of thought, emotion, and volition, and they intuitively refer these phenomena to an underlying substance or subsistence to which the phenomena belong, called soul, spirit, mind. Mind and matter are not the same, nor is mind a result of material organ-

ization. There are no subjects of thought which differ from each other by a greater difference than do the universal conceptions of mind and matter; no two subjects of thought differ from each other more than a spirit and a clod. Men may call themselves materialists, and think themselves sincere and logical, but in spite of themselves, whenever they think of spirit and matter they fail to complete their conception of identity, and think and speak of differences more than world wide. Matter is known by its properties, mind by its phenomena; these properties and phenomena have nothing in common. It is only by a figure of speech, not in literal conception, that knowledge is said to be transparent, and emotion warm; and volition is never characterized by any property of matter. It is impossible to conceive of thought as having extension—a top and a bottom, a north side and a south side, boundary or physical limitation; it is not thick nor thin, hot nor cold, light nor heavy, black nor white. Consciousness does not gravitate—is not compressible nor combustible. All mental phenomena postulate entity, personality, spirit; the affirmation “I am” refers primarily and chiefly to mind and not to matter; the *ego*, self, is not material, it is spirit; the body is only the tabernacle—the tenement which, for a time, the mind inhabits.

It is said that knowledge has its beginning in

sensation; that a man born blind and deaf, without smell, taste, or touch, could not acquire knowledge—would not be conscious—would be to himself the same as though he were not. It may be replied, This is so, but does not prove materialism; it only proves that man, in his present earthly existence, is dependent upon sensation for his first knowledge. The beginnings of thought in man, constituted as he is in his earthly life, are dependent upon sensation; but this does not prove that the spirit of man, disembodied, is incapable of consciousness; contrariwise, all the indications of consciousness on the subject lead men to regard the eye and the ear as mere instruments of mind, as much so as are the telescope or the ear-trumpet, instruments rendered necessary and useful by the present connection established between the body and the mind, but not at all determinative of what is possible to mind under other conditions. The teachings of revelation on this subject are explicit and decisive: “To depart and be with Christ is far better;” “to be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord.”

The false assumptions and inconclusive inferences of materialists to the contrary notwithstanding, the universal convictions of mankind affirm a really existing self, which is spirit, not matter; thought, emotion, and volition, are phenomena of a spirit-substance. This spirit is what each one

calls himself; the cognized certainty of its actual existence is the basis of all knowledge; man knows nothing more certainly, and can know nothing more certainly, than he knows his own personal spiritual existence.

But he did not always exist; he is an effect, and must have had a cause—and a cause adequate to his production. That subject or cause by whose existence he came into existence must itself, like himself, be a spirit, a person—must be what the Bible calls the “Father of spirits”—the spirit-source of all spirit existences; must be self-existent, eternal, independent, uncaused, self-active, intelligent; must be what the Bible calls God. “I am,” therefore, “God is,” regarding the propositions as affirmations having special reference to immaterial personal existences, is an argument whose subject-matter has immediate reference to spirituality and personality, and whose conclusiveness, like the cosmological argument—“the universe is existent,” therefore “God is”—can not be successfully antagonized.

Again, man is conscious of moral obligation—of the feeling expressed in English by the terms *ought* and *ought not*. This sense of obligation is itself a cognition of rightful authority. It has reference to law, and implies a lawgiver; it arises out of, and has its basis in, a sense of dependence. This sense of dependence and corresponding sense

of obligation must, in the last resort, refer to the source of being and of blessings, whose will is law because, and solely because, he is source and author of what we are and what we have. All ethical states of mind prove the divine existence, since obligations such as men are conscious of must find their ultimate basis in the will of God; or, in other words, such a sense of obligation as man is conscious of could not be were there no such being as God, or were not man's relations just the relations of creature to creator—of dependent recipients of blessings to an independent giver—of a being endowed with the power to apprehend and admire excellence in the presence of a being possessed of all possible perfections in an infinite degree.

Extinguish in the mind of man the idea of God, and all morality, as well as piety, dies; all spiritual life ceases. The knowledge of God is the life of the soul. By so much as man is distinguished above mere brute existence—by so much as he is conscious of right and wrong, of duty, of obligation, of the possibility and actuality of moral desert, merit, or demerit—by so much is he conscious of God, to whom these consciousnesses immediately refer, and to whom they stand in inseparable correlation.

Again, the sense of sin and the sense of salvation constituting the elements of Christian

experience with all that pretains thereto, are to the subjects thereof demonstrations of the divine existence and revelations of the divine character. Revelation in the Bible idea of it, given in whatever form, and for whatever purpose, is immediate knowledge of God. All to whom "God at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past," had, and all to whom in these latter days he speaks, have, a knowledge of his being and attributes by personal communication. The sense of sin when it becomes evangelical, and tends to reformation and salvation, expresses itself in the contrite confession, "Against *thee* and *thee only* have I sinned and done this evil in thy sight." The prayer for pardon is, "God be merciful to me a sinner." The sense of forgiveness is uttered forth in a loving, grateful acknowledgment, "Though *thou* wast angry with me thine anger is turned away and *thou* comfortedst me." "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed my transgressions from me." "He brought me up out of an horrible pit, *he* put a new song into my mouth." The whole experience of a sinner saved by grace—spiritual enlightenment, conviction for sin, penitence, desire for salvation, loathing sense of personal depravity, groaning after a new life, regeneration, assurances of salvation, of acceptance, of adoption, of heirship, comfort in affliction, hope of heaven, all that is included in "the grace of

our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God our Heavenly Father, and the communion and fellowship of the Holy Ghost," is referred universally by those who are the subjects of these experiences to the immediate working of God in and upon the soul. Prayer, adoration, thanksgiving, intercession, worship in all its forms, is the immediate intercourse of the soul with God. By so much as man knows that his religious trust and confidence is not delusive, by so much does he know "that God is, and that he is a rewarder of those who diligently seek him." Is it said that this evidence of the divine existence is of no avail to any except to those who are the subjects of a religious experience? It may be replied that the testimony of a company so great that no man can number them, every one of whom possesses all the elements of credibility; all distinctly and unqualifiedly attesting a knowledge of God obtained by answers to prayers, by conscious communion, and by frequent instances of immediate revelation in personal intercourse, ought to be sufficient authentication of any affirmation whatever not in itself absurd.

ANTI-THEISTIC THEORIES.

Atheism is a negation incapable of proof. Under the limitations and conditions of human knowledge, the non-existence of spirit is an affirmation which from the nature of the case can not be

supported by proofs. A spirit may be present where I am, and I have no knowledge of his presence or existence; hence I can neither affirm nor deny as to his existence; of course any affirmation or denial as to the existence or non-existence of spirit beyond the scope of my personal presence is, so far as my testimony goes, a mere nullity. Hence it is evident that no man can, for good reasons, say there is no God. We further affirm that no man can propose to himself the proposition, there is no God, and without doubt believe it; for skepticism as to the divine existence is equivalent to universal skepticism, since there are as good reasons for denying all existence as there are for denying the divine existence; and universal skepticism is impossible; man must believe something; and we affirm he must believe in self, in the universe and in God; where either of them is absent consciousness dies. What then is atheism? It is a professed belief in the non-existence of God; but is really a doubt respecting God voluntarily indulged. It is one thing to believe there is no God, and another to entertain doubts respecting him; the first is impossible, the second is easy and very common. Atheists sometimes attempt to sustain their skepticism by argument. The following is an example: There is not existent a being who is both infinitely powerful and infinitely good; for if we postulate the existence of a being

who is omnipotent, that being could prevent evil if he would; but evil exists: therefore, the infinitely powerful being whose existence we have supposed is not infinitely good. If we suppose the actual existence of a being of infinite goodness, such a being would prevent evil if he could; but evil exists: therefore, the infinitely good being is not omnipotent, hence there is no being all-powerful and of infinite goodness. The present writer does not remember of having met any thing atheistic with more of the semblance of an argument than this; its obvious sophistry might logically be regarded as demonstration of the absurdities of its conclusion. Either horn of the dilemma or both of them may be smitten off at a blow. The prevention of vice, the source of evil, is not dependent upon power; it is no more a limitation of divine power to say it can not prevent evil than it is a limitation of the power of an earthquake to say it can not shake a demonstration in geometry. Again, finite knowledge is incompetent to affirm that the existence of the evil that is, is not permissible by infinite goodness; indeed, for all that man can know, the evil that is permitted may be made tributary to the highest good. The difficulties, inconsistencies, not to say absurdities, of atheism are abundantly manifest in its efforts to account for the existence of those things whose existence it can not deny. He who denies the existence of God can not

ignore the question of his own existence and of that of the universe around him. How came he to be, and to be what he is? Whence came the earth, the sun, the moon, and the stars, with all that in them is? How came they to be, and to be what they are? Does he answer, All things came by chance; what is, is, because among infinite possibilities its chance for existence was equal to that of any other state of things? His answer does not satisfy himself nor any one to whom he may propose it. The order, the harmony, the oneness of design, the evidences of contrivance every-where observable in his surroundings, the existence of power and the consciousness of choice in himself, indeed every object of knowledge both material and mental, all forbid the denial of efficient cause and necessitate the assumption of First Cause. Spontaneity, or absolute beginning, in the sense that nothing produces something, is unthinkable.

Materialism is the affirmation that matter is eternal, and possesses, in itself, the promise and potency of all forms of life. This is contrary to the common sense of mankind. All men distinguish matter and mind as differentiated by greater differences than distinguish any other two objects of thought. We intuitively refer the phenomena of mind to spirit-substance, and the qualities of matter to material substance, and intuitively affirm

that these entities are not one and identical, but two, having nothing in common.

The efforts of physiologists to absorb psychology; of physicists to annihilate mind; of so-called scientists to abolish philosophy and religion, are so manifestly antagonistic to the universal convictions of mankind as that but for their industry in scientific research, and the many valuable results of their labors, the authors of those efforts would be justly subject to the contempt of their fellow-men. An example or two of such efforts may, for illustration, be worthy of notice. Positivism assumes that all knowledge is by sensation—man knows and can know nothing except what he sees, hears, tastes, smells, or touches—that is, man positively knows the qualities of matter, and does not certainly know any thing besides. Now, common sense affirms that in knowing the knower is primary and the known secondary. Self, or mind, the knower, is more than not self, or matter, the known. If, therefore, there can possibly be any difference in the certainty with which mind cognizes self and not self, it must know itself, or mind, more certainly than it knows not self, or matter.

An argument from analogy is given thus: Water is oxygen and hydrogen; the properties of water are not found in its elements. Living matter, or protoplasm, is composed of carbonic acid, water, and ammonia; none of the proper-

ties of protoplasm are found in these elements. Now, as no one thinks it necessary, in the formation of water, to conceive that any principle or agent (call it aquosity) must be added to the constituent elements as essential to the production of water, so it is not necessary that any principle or agent (call it vitality) should be added to the known elements of living matter; it is only necessary that those elements be combined under the required conditions, and life in all its forms—vegetable, animal, and mental—will come into being. This is modern science, by which, with the assumption of the eternity of matter, it is proposed to banish from existence the necessity for a Creator, if not the Creator himself. Another argument of the same kind may be mentioned here, as both may be answered by the same reply. It is found that chemical and physical forces are, in the aggregate, always the same—what is expended in one form is reproduced in another. It is inferred that, therefore, the sum total of all forces, or the whole force of the universe, is immutably the same. This is called the conservation of forces. It is also found that chemical and physical forces are convertible—one may be changed to the other, and then the process may be reversed—this may become that, and then that may become this; heat produces motion, and motion produces heat. Whenever force is exerted it

is at an expense of other force equal to itself; this is called the correlation of forces. Now, since chemical and physical forces are subject to the laws of conservation and correlation, so also, therefore, are all forces, including vital and mental, subject to the same laws; that is to say, because heat may be converted to motion, therefore motion may be converted to life and thought. These are the most advanced atheistic arguments of modern scientists, briefly but fairly stated. Their statement is sufficient refutation; they are plain cases of inferences from analogy where no analogy exists. Water is wholly a material substance: chemical and physical laws affect only matter; vitality, thought, emotion, and volition, have nothing in common with water, and are not at all subject to chemistry or mechanics. That class of modern scientists who reason as above are at great disadvantage in this particular discussion, because of their high pretensions to a close adherence to the consideration of *facts*; they are positivists—recognize nothing as true but that of which they are positive, and are positive of nothing but facts cognized by perception—every thing transcendental or supersensuous is discarded, theorizing is at a total discount, and yet they gravely infer that, because water is nothing but oxygen and hydrogen, therefore mind may be nothing but carbonic acid, water, and ammonia; because heat

produces motion, therefore motion may produce thought!

It were more consistent with the proposed philosophy for its abettors to wait till some chemist, in his laboratory, had, by the combination of the required elements, actually produced the much talked of protoplasm, or, what would be better still, brought to being some growing plant or living animal; or wait till some locomotive could be made to move with such speed as that motion should cease to be motion and become thought—till some machine should stop moving and begin to think.

ETERNITY OF MATTER.

We have seen that actual existence proves eternal existence; since the universe does actually exist, somewhat must have existed always, or sometime nothing produced something; and since the latter is impossible, the former is certain. We have also seen that matter does not account for the existence of mind. Mind, in some form, is eternal; may we not conceive a dualism and affirm the eternal co-existence of both matter and mind? When the eternity of matter is affirmed simply to avoid the idea of creation out of nothing—it being conceded that all the known forms of matter are the products of infinite will—the affirmation seems to involve an effort to conceive of the essence or substance of matter apart from its qualities or

attributes—a conception which, if not impossible, is certainly fruitless and void. All psychologists agree that man knows nothing of the essence of either matter or mind. We intuitively postulate the existence of substance, because it is unthinkable that qualities should inhere in nothing, or that phenomena should belong to nothing; but beyond the mere existence of essences or substances, we can not either affirm or deny any thing. If, however, it be claimed that the conception of substance, apart from its qualities, be valid, and that its existence may be eternal, it is probable that the position thus asserted can not, on rational grounds, be successfully controverted. For aught that human reason sees to the contrary, eternal matter, as to substance, may be as conceivable and possible as eternal mind. The question, therefore, of the eternity of matter in the view of it here contemplated, is determinable only by revelation; and in the light of revelation, its determination turns on the question of creation out of nothing. The terms translated by the word create, and their derivatives, may be taken in the sense of formation out of pre-existent substance, but have generally been regarded by critics as of themselves signifying the bringing into being something out of nothing. Most instances of reference to the work of creation in the Bible seem to imply this sense. In Hebrews xi, 3, we have these words:

“Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear.” This passage is, by some critics, considered as determinative of the question asserting fully the doctrine of creation out of nothing, and, of course, denying the pre-existence of all that is not God.

But opponents of revealed religion, when they affirm the eternity of matter, or what implies it, do so, not so much to antagonize the idea of creation out of nothing, as to deny the doctrine of creation altogether. Any way the theologian has no concern with materialism only when it becomes pronounced atheism. When a scientist affirms that “he sees in matter the promise and potency of all forms of life,” it is only necessary to conceive that matter is eternal to form a theory of existence that entirely ignores creation and a creator, and affirms that matter is the only substance in actual existence and contains in itself that which by evolution becomes all that is.

What is this theory of evolution? and what are the facts upon which it is founded? The maxim that “all life comes from life,” which had well-nigh universally obtained among naturalists, is still admitted by some abettors of the theory of evolution; and with them the theory starts with life, leaving life unaccounted for, and, of course,

leaving a margin for the supposition of a creator. Others start with dead matter. All evolutionists agree that the original forms were but few in number—three or four at most—some assert one sole prototype. All agree that from these few, or this sole form, all subsequent forms come to be from purely physical causes. From the evolution of inherent elements or principles occurring upon chance collocations and combinations without intention or intelligent design, all plants and animals, man included, with all the phenomena they exhibit, thought, emotion, and volition not excepted, come to be what, when, and where they are. The transition from inert matter from the lifeless clod to the various forms of vegetable, animal, intellectual, and spiritual life is not wholly an occurrence of causeless spontaneity or of chance and haphazard, but is in accordance with some observed laws, such as these: The offspring resembles the parent in many respects, but always differs in some: The differences may be improvements or they may be the opposite: Production is vastly greater than the means of support: Hence, a universal struggle for life, in which the strongest prevail and the fittest survive. This is natural selection. By it, in the course of long periods of time, evolution is naturally and necessarily development in the line of improvement. All duration being postulated, or sufficient time allowed, it is affirmed

that by this process a lifeless clod may become a thinking, volitionating, worshiping spirit. Says a late German writer, "Materialism is the philosophy of the five senses; it admits nothing but on the testimony of sensation, and therefore denies the existence of God, and of every thing supersensuous. In its modern form, it teaches that, as the material is alone true and real, it is uncreated and eternal; it always has been, and always will be; it is indestructible, and, in its elements, unchangeable. Force is inseparable from matter. According to this theory no matter is without force, and no force is without matter. No force exists of itself: and therefore there is none to which the creation of matter is to be referred. The universe as it now is, is due to the gradual evolution of two elements, matter and force; which evolution proceeds under the operation of fixed laws. The lower organisms are first formed, then the higher, until man appears. All life, whether animal, vegetable, or spiritual, is due to the working of physical and chemical forces in matter. As no power exists but in matter, there can be no divine being with creative power, nor any created human soul. The scientific naturalist knows only bodies and the properties of bodies; all beyond them is transcendental and chimerical." Vogt says, "We admit of no Creator, either in the beginning or in the course of the world's history, and

regard the idea of a self-conscious, extramundane Creator as ridiculous." According to these writers, "Man consists only of a material body; all mental acts and states are of the brain. When the body dies the man ceases to exist. The only immortality is, that when the body is disintegrated, its ammonia, carbonic acid, and lime serve to enrich the earth and to nourish plants which feed other generations of men." The two classes of evolutionists above referred to differ chiefly, if not solely, in this, one starts with life leaving the origin of things unaccounted for; and the other boldly affirms the eternity and immutability of matter, as to its elements and as to the laws by which its temporary forms are determined. That the latter theory is the most pronounced atheism possible its abettors profess; that the former must be regarded by the theologian as atheistic is manifest from the fact that, though it leaves a margin for the supposition of creation and a creator, and may be designed to be nothing more than an affirmation that evolution is the method by which God does his work, yet, as it supposes that God did all his work in the beginning immeasurably far back in the infinite ages of eternity, and that since then all the historic events of the universe have been, are, and will forever be, determined by what is inherent in matter, it as effectually removes God from the whole sphere of human existence, as if

there were no God, and matter were eternal. In the light of the latter theory, as much so as in the light of the former, moral obligation, virtue and vice, sin and salvation, in the senses in which these terms are used in systems of religion, are impossibilities, prayer is useless, and trust in Providence is a silly superstition. Now, what are the evidences on which these bold atheistic affirmations are founded? from what facts are these doctrines inferred? To detail all that has been advanced would be to rewrite many volumes; fortunately for the cause of truth, this is not necessary.

It is not claimed that the theory of evolution is proved by any fact or argument that is positive and determinative. If it could be shown that under the eye of scientific observation dead matter ever did, by the mere evolution of what was inherent in itself, become a living substance; if unorganized bodies did, of themselves, ever become organized, or vegetables become animals, or radiates become vertebrates; if, by any means, such as the education by which a savage boor becomes a Christian gentleman, a monkey might be made into a man; or if there could be found a somewhat in the process of transformation that is neither vegetable nor animal, but a somewhat between the two, known to have been the one and to be becoming the other, and so becoming by evolving what is inherent in itself, without any addition from what

is external, then would the theory be supported by that which is of the nature of positive proof; but in the total absence of any evidence of this kind, the theory certainly is, at best, but poorly sustained. This absence of positive proof is sometimes accounted for by alleging want of time. It is said human history does not furnish sufficient scope of duration—it requires millions of years for evolution to render itself appreciable. To this it has been as philosophically as facetiously said, “Thousands of years produce nothing; how much is a million times nothing?” Again, it is not claimed that the evidence adduced proves that evolution *is* the law of all forms of earthly life, but that it *may be*, and this is shown only by an inference from alleged analogies. Here let it be remembered, as shown above, that the whole argument for materialism is an argument from analogy where no analogy exists—as when from the fact that one form of matter is transformed to another form of matter, it is inferred that some forms of matter may be transformed into some forms of mind, where an analogy between matter and mind is assumed, but which does not, and never can, exist. And then, also, let it be remembered, that all that is proved by this falsely assumed analogy is the merest possibility that the doctrine of evolution *may be true*, and it will be sufficiently manifest that the theory is sustained by extremely feeble supports.

That the higher forms of existence are not developed out of the lower—that evolution is not the universal or even the general law of earthly constructions—must be manifest from the fact, that the reverse is obviously the law of that which is most manifest in the constitution of things. Gravitation underlies all possibilities of the present state of things; next above it is cohesive attraction; next, chemical affinities; then vegetable life; and after that, man. Cohesion could not be without gravitation—it is conditioned upon it, but is not developed from it; contrariwise, cohesion subordinates gravitation and renders it subservient; the particles of the ceiling must cohere more than they gravitate, or the whole would fall to the floor. Vegetable life could not be, without all that is below it; it is conditioned upon gravitation, cohesion, and chemical affinity, but is not developed out of them; contrariwise, it subordinates them all and renders them subservient. The tree, in opposition to chemical affinities and cohesion, disintegrates the substances it uses, appropriates them as it needs, and, in opposition to gravitation, lifts them scores, and sometimes hundreds, of feet into the air.

Man is conditioned upon all that is below, but is not evolved out of them; contrariwise, all below him are subservient to him. Cohesion is equal to all of gravitation, with something added; chemical

affinity equals cohesion, with something added; and so of all in the series; and man is the equal of all below him, with somewhat added which was not in either or all of them, either actually or potentially. The same law, that the higher equals all below, with something added, pervades all anatomical, physiological, and psychological constructions. God has not constructed this universe, so far as is yet known, even in any part of it, on the plan of evolution (propagation and growth are not the same as evolution), but every-where, as in the beginning, a body is first formed from the dust of the earth, and then the breath of lives is added thereto from the inspiration of the Almighty—"first that which is natural, and after that that which is spiritual"—by the addition of the spiritual to the natural, and not by the evolution of the spiritual out of the natural.

All things are constructed on a scale of being ascending from inert matter to the infinite God. Those in nearest juxtaposition differ from each other by scarcely perceptible differences, and nothing is better known to scientists than that perfect and exhaustive classification is extremely difficult in all cases, and impossible in some; and yet every thing is made "after its kind;" fishes are not fowls, and fowls are not creeping things nor beasts of the earth. "God made the beast of the earth

after his kind, and cattle after their kind," and "God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, male and female created he them." There are no abrupt transitions in the scale of being; in some respects the lower resembles the higher; it is always difficult and sometimes impossible to find the precise line of distinction between them; and yet there is a line somewhere; the distinctions of genera, species, and varieties are real distinctions; and reliable classifications, adequate to valuable scientific purposes, are practicable.

Two things standing in nearest juxtaposition on the scale of being will have several characteristics in common; but if they are generically different, as they will be if they each border on the line that divides the kinds after which they were created, they each have a somewhat peculiar to its kind that never does and never can pass over into the other. A sensitive plant exhibits some of the phenomena of an animal. If the question be asked, Is it an animal? the answer is obvious: If it has sensation it is an animal; it never was, and never will be any thing else: if it has not sensation, then it is a vegetable; its ancestors always were, and its posterity always will be vegetables, and nothing else. Man is an animal endowed with rational, emotional, æsthetic, volitional, moral, and religious faculties. His physical nature takes up all below

him in the scale of being; his body gravitates, coheres, is subject to chemical affinities, vegetates, and exhibits all the functions of animal life; added to these, not evolved out of them, is his supersensuous nature, by which he is distinguished from the mere animal. Now, if a species of animal were found resembling man in all the characteristics of his physical constitution, but destitute of those higher faculties by which man is distinguished, all would at once agree that that species did not belong to the human race; and all the analogies of existence teach that the posterity of that species never could become any thing more than mere animals; they never could become capable of apprehending the true, the beautiful, the ludicrous, the right; never would be subject to moral obligation, or know any thing of moral desert. Again, all the things and beings God has created are capable of improvement by culture, and culture makes great differences; many varieties of plants and animals may be produced by cultivation, and sometimes the differences thus produced are so many and so great that to cursory observation it seems impossible that the varieties should be of the same species; but culture never yet so affected generic differences, as that any thing ever ceased to be what it originally was, and came to be something else; radiates never cease to be radiates, never become vertebrates; fishes never become fowls, and monkeys never be-

come men. A pig may become a "learned pig," but he is a pig still, and all his progeny in their successive generations will remain the same. What generically belongs to the higher is never evolved out of the lower. Evolution is not the law of vegetable and animal life.

Pantheism.—The difficulty in discussing this anti-theistic theory is, that no one seems to know precisely what is intended by the term. The doctrine of an extramundane personal creator, preserver, and governor of all things is denied, and pantheism is affirmed; but what pantheism is, it is difficult if not impossible to ascertain. "Every thing is God," or "God is every thing." Too many profound philosophers have professed pantheism to allow the supposition that the term is used literally in its etymological sense—the extremely gross idea that God is arithmetically the sum total of all existence, so that it may be said that each individual thing is a part of God; for example, the writer is a part of God, the desk on which he writes another part, the chair in which he sits another, and so of all persons and things, must be a conception too absurd for thinkers; and yet the figures and illustrations employed to explain the theory seems to imply as much. A figure frequently employed, and evidently a favorite one with pantheistic writers is, "a wave and the ocean." Man is to God what the wave is to the

ocean that bears it; a distinct individuality having a momentary existence on the surface of that of which it is a part, and then by absorption in that from which it came disappearing and as an individual ceasing to be.

Pantheism is sometimes called "Monism," by which without doubt it is intended to affirm that there is but one substance, and that substance is God. Some affirm that the one sole substance is matter, and that gives materialistic pantheism, which, as we see it, differs not at all in any important respect from the most pronounced atheistic materialism. Any way, all the difficulties, inconsistencies, and absurdities of materialism clearly antagonize this form of pantheism. Others affirm that the one sole substance is mind, and this is idealistic pantheism, and is sufficiently refuted by the universal convictions of mankind. All men, idealists themselves included, continually think, speak, and act as though matter had a real existence, and it is not possible for them to think and act otherwise; if man does not certainly know that matter has a real existence, he does not know any thing.

The more common form of pantheism affirms the existence of the one sole substance in two forms or modes, or more correctly as having two attributes. The infinite universal being, in the form or mode of thought is mind; in the form or mode of extension is matter. God is every thing.

Considered as thought he is mind; considered as extension he is matter. All events are acts of God; he comes to consciousness in the thoughts of men, and if there be any angels or devils in their thoughts as well. He is eternal, is what he is and does what he does by the necessity of his nature. Of course free will is an impossible thing, first cause and contingency are but ideal conceptions; responsibility and moral desert are non-entities or mere figments of the imagination, silly superstitions. 'Tis true some professed pantheists affirm free-will, virtue, and vice, but with what consistency is not apparent. Pantheism in any and all its forms involves fatalism, and must for that reason, as well as for its inherent errors, be rejected. The speculations by which the support of this theory is attempted are too obscure and unintelligible to admit of distinct and perspicuous reply; and since minds given to such speculations are not likely to trouble these pages or be troubled by them, they may be passed without further notice.

Dualism.—The theory that there are two eternal spirits, one good and the other evil, in eternal and perpetual conflict one with the other, and that good or evil prevail in the universe as, for the time being, one or the other is in the ascendant, was, in olden times, held by some distinguished philosophers, and had, for a time, some

influence among Christian sects. This, with another form of dualism which taught that God and matter are two co-existent and eternal entities, the latter being essentially evil and unmanageable, seems to have been resorted to mostly as a convenient method of accounting for the origin of evil. All forms of dualism, as well as pantheism and atheism, are fatalistic, and tend to release the conscience from its sense of responsibility by referring to fate, or to incorrigible matter, or to an evil god, as the source of all unrighteousness, both in character and in conduct. This may account, in part, for the existence of these theories, and the persistence with which their abettors adhere to them, and the zeal with which they defend them. But at best they are mere theories, entirely without proof, and are supported only by speculations as to what, by possibility, may be.

Polytheism.—If the inclination to evil, and the practice and prevalence of it; if the love of error, and the zeal sometimes evinced in its defense; if the evils and errors that are abroad in the world can be explained—explained as to the history of their origin, as to the basis of their support—then the philosophy of the existence and history of polytheism may be explained. To us it seems an inexplicable mystery that mankind, starting with the knowledge of the true God, with a monotheistic religion and worship, should ever become so

debased, intellectually and morally, as to reject God, believe in lords many and gods many, worship innumerable divinities, plunge through polytheism to the grossest idolatries, and become worshipers of stocks and stones. But so it hath been “when men knew God; as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, they became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened; they changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshiped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed forever, Amen.”

CHAPTER II.

ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

WE have seen that the pantheistic idea of God is chiefly an effort to conceive an infinite, eternal, unconscious monad, without attributes or personality. The Christian idea sees the one infinite, eternal substance as subsisting in consciousness, personality, and attributes—the attributes in the substance and the substance in the attributes—both essential to the idea, and each inseparable from the other. Hence it is manifest, that the Christian doctrine of the attributes forms the chief and all-important part of Christian theology. As is this conception, so is philosophy, so is religion. The idea of God, and, by consequence, the idea of the divine attributes, is fundamental; here is the basis of all truth and all spiritual life; ignorance, or doubt *here*, is a bar to certain knowledge every-where. The possibility of knowing the true God, and knowing him as he is, must be conceded at the start, or all investigations are baseless. It is not competent to say that God is an object of

faith but not of reason; a faith that is antagonized by reason must, at best, be feeble—must be of the nature of a superstition, and be fruitful of results deleterious to truth and religion; indeed, in most minds such a faith is well-nigh an impossibility.

Arguments produced to prove that the knowledge of God is impossible must be sophisms, since the actuality of such knowledge is more manifest than the truth of any premise from which such an impossibility can be inferred. For example, it is said that the absolute must be unknowable, because knowledge implies a knower and a known—that is, implies a relation, and the relative is contradictory of the absolute. Again, it is said the infinite must be unknowable, since knowledge implies limitation, and limitation is contradictory of infinity. Now, all this, even though extended, as it is in Hamilton and Mill, to great length, amounts, when translated into the language of common sense, to an affirmation that where perfect, exhaustive knowledge is impossible, all knowledge is impossible; because man can not know every thing, therefore he can not know any thing; all conceptions that are not exhaustive are nullities. Evidently this is not so. I can not conceive exhaustively the amount of water in the Atlantic Ocean, and yet I do know something about the Atlantic Ocean, and know that something certainly.

ANTHROPOPATHY.

The method of conceiving of the divine attributes, or, which is the same thing, the method of conceiving the idea of God, is, by the necessity of the case, as follows: Man, by consciousness, has apprehensions of knowledge, emotion, and volition in himself; as best he can he adds to these apprehensions the idea of the infinite, or conceives of knowledge, emotion, and volition, without limitations; he postulates an underlying spirit, to which the phenomena of which he is conscious belong, and thus has an idea of self; he postulates an underlying spirit to which his apprehended infinite knowledges, emotions, and volitions belong, and thus has an idea of God. Now, it is said by way of objection, that this idea is simply an idea of an infinite man—this is anthropopathy. This is the only idea of God man has or can have. But God is not an infinite man; he is something essentially and necessarily different; therefore, man has not, and can not have, a true idea of God. God is not an object of knowledge; he is at best only an object of faith.

These and kindred objections to the doctrine of the possible knowledge of God are put forth by some philosophers, and indeed by some theologians, with apparently great confidence and an intense horror of anthropopathy; but we are persuaded that this confidence is assumed and that

this horror is affected. The common convictions of mankind reject all such objections on *prima facie* evidence; they are intuitively confident that they have some knowledge of the infinite, and to them the confidence they have in God is more reliable than any apprehended conclusiveness in the arguments adduced to prove them totally ignorant of him. Again, we believe in God not as a matter of unreasoning and unreasonable faith, but because our faith is founded in good and valid reasons. The infinite and absolute has come out of his eternity in his works, has created man in his own image, has endowed man with the power of apprehending God intuitively. Man, having intuitive knowledge of the divine existence, obtains further knowledge of the divine nature and character, or of what God is, by what he does. The voices of nature speak to man with a commanding eloquence, and all proclaim the divine hand by which they were formed. God is seen in history; providence proclaims divine power and personal supervision, but above all God is revealed in the person of his Son. Christ said, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." That God hath spoken unto us by his Son is evinced in the light of reason; is evidenced as reasonable knowledge and not unreasoning faith, by the many and convincing proofs by which we know that sacred "Scripture is given by inspiration of God."

UNITY OF GOD.

God is one in the sense that he is pure, simple being—not compounded. He is one, in the sense of sole, solitary being. He has no companion, there is no other being of the same kind. He is one, in the sense of *necessary* simple and solitary being; there not only *is* no other God, but there *can not be* another. The Bible proofs of the divine unity are sufficient and satisfactory. “The Lord our God is one Lord;” “The Lord he is God, and there is none else beside him;” “Thou art God alone;” “Now, unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God, be honor and glory forever and ever, Amen.” *A priori* ontological arguments are of but little value in discussing the doctrine of the divine attributes, beyond showing that Christian faith is not antagonized, but the rather sustained by sound logic. For example, examine the argument from necessary being: take it in its briefest form, I have an idea of the most perfect being possible; a being who has equals is not so perfect as one who is superior to all others, and therefore solitary and alone; hence, the being of whose existence I have a conception is one who is necessarily pure, simple, solitary being, who has not and can not have an equal.

The cosmological argument is more useful

because more illustrative; it consists in inferring from the harmony and order of the divine works, from the evident oneness of design every-where manifest in nature, the oneness of will and intelligence, and consequently oneness of being in the divine Author of all things. To exhaust this subject would require a knowledge of the whole circle of natural science and an examination of all the works of God, in which we should find abundant evidence of one controlling, governing mind, one author of all that is. Natural science so conclusively reveals the unity of God, and in respect to it confirms the convictions of rational thought and the testimony of the inspired Scriptures, that the existence of polytheism can be accounted for only by the strange and strong, the dark and deep, depravity of human nature, which, when it knows God, desires not to retain the knowledge of him, and its foolish heart becomes darkened to worship the creature more than the creator, and then to make to itself lords many and gods many, and in abject servility fall down and worship them.

SPIRITUALITY OF GOD.

God is a Spirit; is mind, not matter, not body; pure spirit, unconnected with any bodily form or organ; "the invisible God whom no man hath seen nor can see," "the Father of spirits," "the God of the spirits of all flesh." The contradictory

of this doctrine is materialism, which has been sufficiently discussed in these pages. When we say God is a spirit, we are certain we say something and that that something is true, and yet we know not what we say; that is, we have not an exhaustive conception of all that is expressed by the words we employ; we do not know fully what a spirit is. The term is defined by saying it is not matter; or again, by saying it is that that thinks, feels, and wills—the former tells what spirit is not, and the latter what it does, but neither expresses what it is. The idea we have of what the divine spirit is, is derived from our idea of what the human spirit is; this involves the actual existence of a real entity, a substance, an individual simple substance, endowed with power to know, to feel, and to will, a person conscious of self and not self, capable of moral actions and susceptible of moral character. These elements of being, conceived of as without limitation or defect, with all other known or unknown possible perfections infinite in degree, make up our idea of God, and this, in the light of our conscious intuitions, confirmed, illustrated and enlarged by revelation, we are confident is, so far as it goes, a true idea; our knowledge of God is at best extremely limited and imperfect, but it is still positive knowledge; of his spirituality and consequent self-conscious personality we can not reasonably doubt. The Bible teaches us to address God

as “our Father;” to believe in him as having spoken at sundry times and in divers manners unto the fathers; as an object of worship, to be trusted in with all confidence; as preserver, benefactor, and redeemer. We are to look to him for salvation. He “is God, and beside him there is no Savior.” In all that the Bible teaches respecting man’s intercourse with his Maker, it represents God as a person, a spirit, in whose image man is created, whose likeness we are, and the knowledge of whom is like unto the knowledge we have of ourselves.

ETERNITY OF GOD.

When it is said that God is eternal, the primary idea is, that his existence had no beginning and will have no end; but evidently the Scripture representations and the philosophic thought involve something more than the mere idea of infinite duration: eternity is regarded as an attribute of God; that is, he is eternal in the sense that it is his nature to exist. He is the “I am;” necessary existence is involved in the idea of his being and nature; so that the supposition that at any moment of infinite duration his non-existence is possible, is self-contradictory, is absurd. “Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God; of old

hast thou laid the foundation of the earth and the heavens are the work of thy hands. They shall perish, but thou shalt endure, yea all of them shall wax old like a garment; as a vesture shalt thou change them and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall have no end." God is "the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity." He saith, "I am the first and I am the last; and besides me there is no God." "A thousand years in his sight are but as yesterday, when it is past. One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." He is "the same, yesterday, and to-day and forever," and "which is, which was, and which is to come." He is the eternal everlasting God who only hath immortality.

It is sometimes said that these affirmations so evidently true are equivalent to the affirmation that with God there is no past or future, but from eternity to eternity one eternal now. If this be a denial that God sees things and events in succession, it is objectionable; for evidently events occur in succession, and God sees things as they are; not that he is older to-day than yesterday; nor yet that he is a stagnant ocean, eternally, immutably the subject of one and the same sole consciousness. He apprehends all his intelligent creatures as having a present, a past, and a future, as doing this now and that then. To himself

his own thoughts, purposes, and plans may be as eternal as himself; and in this regard perhaps the conception of an eternal now may be valid; but as to all that is not God, it must be conceived that God regards them as existent yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow. Of the truthfulness of the primary thought in respect to the eternity of God, namely, that his existence had no beginning and will have no end, and also of the conception of necessary and therefore eternal existence, there can not be reasonable doubt; beyond this, probably silence is wiser than speculation.

IMMUTABILITY.

God is unchangeable, with him there "is no variableness or shadow of turning." He is "the same, yesterday, to-day, and forever." He saith of himself, "I am the Lord, I change not." His name, "I am," indicates both his eternity and his immutability. Since as to his existence he is eternal and independent, nothing that is not God could determine any thing as to what he is; and since he possesses all possible perfections in an infinite degree, there can not be in himself any thing of the nature of self-development or evolution; hence, he must be, as to all that essentially pertains to his divine nature, eternally the same. The doctrine of the divine immutability must not be so understood as to antagonize the doctrine of divine

personality. To say that God can not change, is not the same as to say he can not act. He is immutable, and also perpetually active. He knows, feels, and wills, and in him, as in his creatures, knowledge, emotion, and volition have their peculiar characteristics, and are governed by their own peculiar laws.

The divine intelligence is immutable, in the sense that it is an eternal, perfect knowledge of all things; but evidently a perfect knowledge of all things is a knowledge of them as they are: possible, as possible; actual, as actual; past, as past; present, as present; and future, as future; necessary events, as necessary, and contingent events, as contingent. The phenomena of the divine moral and æsthetic nature are immutably the same, in the sense that they eternally correspond with the inherent nature of their object. God loves invariably that which is excellent, and ever feels aversion to that which is unlovely. He loves righteousness and rewards the righteous, hates iniquity and punishes the wicked. He is immutable in the principles of his government, and is as variable in the application of those principles as are the ever varying objects to which they apply.

OMNIPOTENCE.

Man is conscious, that within limits he is first cause; he originates effects, he is the conscious

author of intentional acts. That in himself by whose existence somewhat else comes into existence, he calls *power*. Power or force in man is very limited; he produces most of what he brings to pass, by his control over other forces; most of the effects of which man is cause, he produces by the use of means; he can not will into existence a railroad, a steamship, a warehouse. Such effects are the product of protracted labor, and the use of various appliances. By removing all limitations of power as it exists in man, we arrive at the idea of Omnipotence. God speaks, and it is done. He wills, and it comes to pass. He says, "Light be," and light is. His volitions create the heavens and the earth; all things are upheld by the word of his power; at the motion of his will, sun, moon, and stars move in their appointed place; winds cease, or tornadoes sweep o'er the land; mountains rest in everlasting quiet on their firm bases, or earthquakes heave vast ranges toward the sky; lepers are cleansed, the blind see, and the dead are raised. "With God all things are possible." "Our God is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he pleased." "Whatsoever the Lord pleased, that did he in heaven and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places." The Lord God omnipotent reigneth, and doeth his pleasure among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth." "He spreadeth

out the heavens and treadeth upon the waves of the sea; he maketh Arcturus, Orion, and Pleiades and the chambers of the South; he doeth great things past finding out, yea, and wonders without number. He stretcheth out the north over the empty place and hangeth the earth upon nothing. He bindeth up the waters in the thick clouds, and the cloud is not rent under them; he compasseth the waters with bounds until the day and night come to an end. He brake up for the sea a decreed place and sets bars and doors, and said, Hitherto shalt thou come and no further, and here shall thy proud waves be stayed. He looketh to the end of the earth and seeth under the whole heaven to make the weight for the winds, to weigh the waters by measure, to make a decree for the rain and a way for the lightning of the thunder. He hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales and the hills in a balance.”

The Scripture representations of the divine power appearing on well-nigh every page, of which the above quoted are examples, are incomparable in their perspicuity and their sublimity; perspicuous because written by the inspiration of the Almighty, who alone can comprehend the measure of his power; and sublime because the thing described is

itself the perfection of sublimity. These are not the invented words of a poetic fancy, but the words of truth and soberness, literally presenting the thought intended. They teach distinctly that all possibilities are subject to the divine power, God's volitions are competent to produce all that can be. That which is not doable, contradictions, absurdities, are not subjects of power; it is no limitation of power to say that it can not cause the same thing to be and not to be, at the same time. Axioms, mathematical, and ethical as well, are not subjects of power; principles of right and wrong, of beauty and deformity, are like axioms and first truths, eternal, immutable, not effects or results of causes, and stand in no correlation to power. The angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles not because God willed they should be; it is not germane to the nature of the case to say the divine power might have caused them to be less or more. That it is right that social beings should exercise good will one toward another is not because of power or volition; it is not conceivable that the case could be reversed.

Besides things impossible in themselves absolutely, there are other things impossible in the sense of being inconsistent with the actual. God can not lie; that is, it is impossible that at the same time God should be infinitely holy, and still be wanting in moral integrity. It is within the

scope of power; it is physically, naturally possible that God should do wrong, but it is morally impossible; that is, it is inconsistent with the essential holiness of his character.

It is here noteworthy to observe the impassable gulf between the teachings of Scripture and the so-called modern philosophy of the absolute and infinite. In the light of said philosophy God is unknown and unknowable; unrevealed and unrevealable, is unconscious and impersonal; he can not will except by the necessity of his nature; his will and his power are identical; the actual is the measure of the possible; what is is, because God could do no otherwise than will it; what is not, is not, because God has no power to produce it. This philosophy of the absolute is pronounced fatalism; and, as we see it, differs in nothing essential from the boldest atheism. An attempt to avert the charge of fatalism is made, by averring that fatal necessity is only when its subject is constrained by a force external to himself; or, in other words, any subject is free when exempt from constraint not inhering in his own nature. There is nothing external to the absolute and infinite to constrain it, therefore God is free; but he being absolute and infinite can not be other than he is, or do other than he does.

Again, the same philosophers, and the positivists as well, deny to man the knowledge of causa-

tion, and of course the knowledge of power. Man knows nothing but what is testified to him by his senses; neither sight, hearing, taste, touch, nor smell reveal efficiency; all we know is stated succession—cause, effect, power, free-will, spontaneity are impossibilities. How infinitely superior the conception of a personal Creator, who is such that when he speaks it is done; when he commands, it stands fast; who, in the beginning, said, “Light be,” and light was; and concerning whom it is said that all of the known and visible universe are “but parts of his power.” He does what he will, and restrains his power as it pleaseth him.

Again, this transcendental philosophy of the absolute and the infinite, since it affirms that “that which is conceived as absolute and infinite must be conceived as containing within itself the sum, not only of all actual, but of all possible, modes of being; since, if any actual mode be denied of it, it is related to that mode and limited by it; and, if any possible mode can be denied of it, it is capable of becoming more than it now is, and such capability is a limitation,” not only affirms that the actual is the measure of the possible, that is, that God does all he can do, but it also involves the pantheistic assertion, that the actual *is* the absolute and the infinite; that is, translated into theistic language, God does all that is done. Some theologians, when discussing the doctrine of

a particular providence, seem to fall into the same error. They discourse on this wise: God is the source of all power; the divine volitions are first cause of all force; secondary causes, intermediate agencies, are but instruments; the first source is sole efficient cause; again, the Bible speaks of God as doing this and that, in cases where angelic and human agencies are concerned, and are as active and free as ever. All this is simply pantheistic fatalism; if true, then "God is every thing and every thing is God;" he is sole existence and sole agency; he is existent and active by the eternal necessity of his nature; moral character and all that pertains thereto is excluded; moral beings and a moral government are impossibilities; our consciousness of power, of choices, of obligation, of virtue or vice, of merit or demerit, is a lie; our approvals and our censures, our laws and our legislation, our apprehensions of responsibility and expectations of retribution, are silly conceptions of a deluded imagination; in a word, the whole of human history is one profoundly mysterious falsehood.

The conception that because God created the substances out of which iron, lead, and gunpowder are manufactured, and created the men by whose minds and muscles gunpowder is made to propel cannon-balls, therefore it is legitimate, philosophic, and truthful to conceive of God as present on the

battle-field, carrying cannon-balls to and from each of the armies there contending in deadly conflict, must be regarded as extravagantly poetic—not logical, neither good philosophy, nor sound theology. God is not sole being nor sole agent; there are other beings and other first causes, and the fact that God created those other beings and constituted them first causes does not, therefore, cause them to be non-existent, or not to be what God made them. There are other existences in the universe besides God, and there are other efficient agents; things are done which God does not do. All things are possible to God, but it is not true that all possibilities are necessitated; some things are possible which do not exist, and some things exist which might have been non-existent.

OMNIPRESENCE.

“Whither shall I go from thy spirit, or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there; if I take the wings of the morning and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea, even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me. Can any hide himself in secret places that I shall not see him? Do not I fill heaven and earth, saith the Lord? Am I a God at hand, saith the Lord, and not a God afar off? Thus saith the Lord, Behold heaven is my

throne and earth is my footstool. Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens can not contain thee. Though he dig into hell, thence shall my hand take him; though he climb up into heaven, thence will I bring him down; and though he hide himself in the top of Carmel, I will reach and take him out from thence. In him we live and move and have our being. He filleth all things." "God is every-where, but he is not every thing. All things have their being in him, but he is distinct from all things. He fills the universe, but is not mingled with it. He is the intelligence which guides, and the power which sustains, but his personality is preserved, and he is independent of the works of his hand."

Like all other ideas we have of God, the idea of ubiquity is anthropopathic. Within the limits within which we know by immediate knowledge what transpires, and within which we have the power of effecting immediate results, we conceive ourselves as present; we, as best we can, remove all limitations from this apprehension, and thus conceive of a presence which is co-extensive with unlimited space; or, of a person having immediate knowledge of all that transpires, and power to effect immediate results in all places every-where throughout infinite space. This person is, to our thought, God—that presence is the divine ubiquity. That God is every-where present, is

admitted by the common intelligence without doubt or wavering; philosophic speculation is not competent to shake the confidence most men have in the omnipresence of God. The devout worship God, always, every-where, as a being near at hand and not afar off—as knowing all their thoughts, intents, and desires, their susceptibilities and capabilities, their dangers and difficulties—as having now and here a perfect knowledge of all the past, and as seeing the end from the beginning; they trust in God as having at command, here present, all power to make all things work together for their good. Whenever and wherever they pray unto him they apprehend him, as then and there in the infinite fullness of divine perfections, a very present help in every time of need.

It is useless to say that the infinite is incomprehensible; all know this, and clearly recognize it in thought. No one but God himself has an exhaustive conception of unlimited presence; no one has apprehension of the mode or manner of the divine existence—how it is, or how it is possible that a person should be every-where, no finite being can tell. To the finite the infinite is past finding out; and yet it is not to be conceded for a moment that the confidence and trust of piety in the ubiquity of God is unfounded, or that the apprehensions men have of the divine omnipresence are mere negations or nullities; as far as they go

they are truthful concepts of a well-known reality. Such assumptions as are inconsistent with the Bible representations and the common apprehensions must be rejected. For example, if it be affirmed that God is every-where present by extension or diffusion, so that it may be said that a part of God is here and a part of God there; or if it be said that God is present every-where solely by his knowledge and his power, such views are to be rejected, since truth requires us to conceive that the divine *essence* is unlimited as fully and as perfectly as are the divine attributes. God, as to all that is God, is every-where always; the infinite essence is incapable of division and separation; essence and attribute, immutably inseparable, fill immensity; all of God every-where, is a truth cognized both by piety and sound philosophy.

OMNISCIENCE.

“Known unto him are all his works from the beginning of the world. Lord, thou hast searched me and known me; thou knowest my down sitting and mine up rising, thou understandest my thought afar off. Thou compasses my path and my lying down, and art acquainted with all my ways. For there is not a word in my tongue but lo! O Lord, thou knowest it altogether. The darkness hideth not from thee, but the night shineth as the day. The ways of man are before the eyes of the Lord,

and he pondereth all his goings. He searcheth their hearts and understandeth every imagination of their thoughts. Hell is naked before him, and destruction hath no covering. Great is the Lord, and his understanding is infinite. He that planted the ear, shall he not hear? he that formed the eye, shall he not see? he that teacheth man knowledge, shall he not know? The eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good. All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do.”

Omniscience, since God is a person, is inseparable from his eternity and ubiquity. Since God inhabits eternity and fills immensity; since his presence extends to all duration and all space, immediate knowledge of all that is must be his by the necessity of his nature; and knowledge in God must be the same in kind as knowledge in his creatures, differing only in degree and perfection—theirs is limited, his without limitation; theirs inadequate and imperfect, his complete and perfect in kind and degree. Man knows certainly but a very few things; God knows all things with absolute and infallible certainty. But knowledge is knowledge, whether human or divine. To affirm that knowledge is ascribed to God only by a figure of speech, just as he is said to have eyes and ears and hands, is to undermine the whole system of Bible theology—is to affirm that the

Scriptures give no reliable information as to the divine nature and attributes—is to render all discussion respecting God unintelligible; it is to make theology an impossibility, and piety a superstition. Figurative language is *evidently* figurative or it is a failure. The language of the Scriptures when speaking of God as a spirit, knowing, feeling, and willing, is evidently *not* figurative but literal—to be taken in precisely the same sense as when speaking of any other intelligent and moral being; if not so, then no idea at all is communicated; the language is without meaning, all parties are alike ignorant, controversies must close, and the knowledge of God must be given up as impossible.

With the exception of atheists, pantheists, positivists, and that class of thinkers who have discussed the absolute and the infinite in a way to philosophize themselves into a profession of total ignorance and into a conviction that the knowledge of God is impossible, all men regard the infinite First Cause as not only absolute and infinite, but also as a Person possessing intelligence and free will, and especially regard his intelligence as without limitation. In the common apprehension God has a perfect knowledge of all that is or can be; all existences and all events, the actual and the possible, the present, the past, and the future. Of course, this apprehension, like every other idea of God, has its difficulties, many and great. The

chief difficulty in accepting the doctrine of the divine omniscience as just now defined is met when the attempt is made to reconcile the divine prescience with the doctrine of free will and moral responsibility. It is said if all future events, the volitions of men included, are foreknown, then are they certain; if certain, they can not be otherwise. If human volitions can not be otherwise than they are, how can men be held morally responsible for them?

This problem is solved in several ways which will be noticed hereafter. The only view taken of this question, which is naturally connected with the subject now under consideration, the prescience of God, is as follows: Free-will and moral responsibility are matters of consciousness; we *know* man is a moral agent; but if men's volitions are distinguishable as virtuous and vicious, then men must have control over these volitions, must have power to determine them; a moral volition must be a contingency; men must be free not only *to*, but also *from* that for which they are responsible, they must be endowed with alternativity, with a power to the contrary; but if foreknowledge be admitted man has no such power, therefore the certain knowledge of a future contingency is impossible; such an event is not knowable.

First, if foreknowledge and moral responsibility *are* so antagonistic that one or the other must be

rejected, then the argument is sound, and foreknowledge of moral actions must be denied, for man knows nothing more certainly than he knows that he *is* morally responsible. But, secondly, the Bible abounds with prophecies of future events in which human agency and free-will are as obviously concerned as in any events of human life; therefore, the two, foreknowledge and free-will, are not contraries: and thirdly, the argument is fallacious in that it identifies certainty with necessity. To say an event *will be* is not the same as to say it *must be*. The two agree in affirming the certainty of the event; but they differ in this, “will be” *implies* the *possibility* of the opposite; “*must be*” affirms that that opposite is impossible. Here is a clearly cognized distinction; the two are not the same. God may know that an event *will* transpire and at the same time know that the opposite *may* take place. An either-causal power, a pluri-potent cause, an agency adequate to the production of either of several effects, may exist. The divine prescience may cognize all the possibilities of such an agency, may know that this agency is just as adequate to the production of any one of those possibilities as of any other—that every one severally is as possible as any one; and also know certainly which one will become actual. *Will be* and *may not be* can be predicated of the same thing at the same time.

Foreknowledge and free-will are not antagonistic, they may co-exist. One real difficulty in the case is the question of mode, how God came by his knowledge—a question which no wise man will attempt to answer. Another has respect to the dealings of God with man in grace and providence. Why the riches of grace and the interferences of providence are lavished upon men when in the foreknowledge of God it is certain those men will abuse those mercies to their own destruction, is not manifest to human reason. This is one of “the ways of the Lord” that “are past finding out,” one of the “clouds,” a shadow of the “darkness” round about him. To human observation God deals with men as though he did not know what would become of them; but notwithstanding these mysteries of divine grace and providence, we are fully assured that God knows the end from the beginning; has perfect knowledge of all existences and events, actual and possible, present, past, and future.

WISDOM.

The usual classification of the divine attributes into natural and moral is of but little, if of any, worth. Omniscience and Omnipotence are classed among what are called the natural attributes; but knowledge and power are elements in the nature of a moral agent. Again, wisdom is classed

among the moral attributes, but it is as essential to the nature of God as any of the so-called natural attributes; indeed, it is implied in Omniscience or may be regarded as one of the phases of the infinite intelligence. Wisdom is manifested in the selection of the best ends, and of the best means for the accomplishment of those ends. It is characteristic of wisdom that its ends are those most appropriate to the character and condition of the agent, and to the peculiarities of the persons and things concerned; and its means are those most efficient and as simple and inexpensive as is consistent with efficiency.

Considered as an attribute, wisdom must be that trait in the divine character which prompts to the selection of such ends and means. Men intuitively apprehend God as a being infinitely wise; as his knowledge is without limitation, the best ends and means must be ever present to his mind, and as he is a being than whom there can be no greater, none more perfect; as he possesses all possible perfections in an infinite degree, it were derogatory to his nature to suppose he ever would select any other than the best. As all the works of God evince design, so do they declare his wisdom. The glory of God and the good of his creatures are the highest ends known to thought, and every-where in all God's works, from least to greatest, there are wonderful adaptations

to the accomplishment of these high intents. In history as well as in natural science, divine wisdom is displayed on every page; providence, as well as nature, evinces a controlling power, making all things work together for good. The Scriptures abundantly confirm these views. In redemption divine wisdom is specially revealed. By the Church through all ages, to principalities and powers the manifold wisdom of God is made known. "Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God; he is the only wise God. O Lord, how manifold are thy works; in wisdom hast thou made them all."

GOODNESS.

Goodness is a generic term; the species included under it are benevolence, love, mercy, and grace. The generic idea is good-will; a principle in the nature of the person which prompts a desire for, and efforts toward, the well-being of others. The term benevolence used in its etymological sense, "to wish well," is synonymous with goodness; it is a disposition to promote happiness. Specifically it is distinguishable only in this, that its objects are all sensitive creatures irrespective of their character or condition. Love has been defined to be a pleasant state of mind accompanied with a desire for good toward its object: its distinguishing characteristic is, that its objects are

rational beings; though it is not unfrequently in common language used indiscriminately, we speak of the love of home, the love of our native land, and often use the term for any benevolent affection, whatever be its object. But, more properly, love indicates the complacency, the desire, the delight which is awakened by the apprehension of rational and moral excellencies in its object. The term admiration expresses nearly the same thing. Mercy is kindness exercised toward the miserable; it includes pity, compassion, forbearance, and gentleness. Grace is love exercised toward the unworthy.

Goodness considered as an attribute of the Divine Being, a trait in his character, an element of his nature, including all that is expressed by the several terms above mentioned, prompting desires for, and efforts toward, the well-being of all his creatures, is the topic of present discussion. That God is good in the sense above defined is abundantly asserted in the Holy Scriptures. "God is love; he is good; his mercy endureth forever; good and upright is the Lord; thou, Lord, art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee. The Lord is good to all, and his tender mercies are over all his works. There is none good but one, that is God. Gracious is the Lord and righteous, yea our God is merciful; with the Lord there is mercy and

with him there is plenteous redemption. The Lord is gracious and full of compassion, slow to anger and of great mercy. The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and plenteous in mercy. The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin. Thou, O Lord, art a God full of compassion and gracious, long suffering and plenteous in mercy and truth.”

The philosophy of the absolute and infinite, as it denies all consciousness in God, so of course it denies all passivity, and here it seems to fancy, is its special forte. God it is said, can not love; for if he do, he is related to, limited by, and dependent upon, that which is the object of his affection; and this is plainly contradictory to the absolute and infinite. This so-called philosophy so preposterously contradicts the testimony of the Scriptures and the common intelligence of mankind that it would seem unworthy of notice but for the high consideration due to the thinkers by whom it is advocated. In what has been said above, we have not attempted, and do not here attempt, any discussion on philosophic grounds, of these speculations; for to our thought it were more consistent with reason if need be to discard the idea of the absolute than to reject all the evidences of a divine personality; that is, if in

thought I am compelled either to deny that God is absolute and infinite, or to deny that he loves his creatures, I should regard it as more consistent with reason and truth to deny the former.

To believe that God is infinitely good, and that he does all that infinite wisdom can devise, and all that infinite power can execute for the happiness of his creatures may be easy, but to reconcile such a faith with the facts of human observation and experience is extremely difficult, and perhaps to man in his earthly condition impossible. To reconcile the existence of evil with the goodness of God is the problem of *theodicy*; a problem that, through all the ages, has occupied the profoundest thought of men the most highly endowed, the most extensively learned, as well as the most devoutly pious. Science, philosophy, and religion have contributed their richest treasures to the solution of this problem. The best abilities and largest resources of mankind have been employed; but it is not too much to say that as yet no solution has been obtained which is satisfactory to any considerable portion of those who give their thoughts to this subject. Fatalists, Atheists, Materialists, Pantheists, and Dualists, all agree that what is, is because it could not not be; all existences and events are necessary; there are no contingencies; the thought that any thing which is might not have been, or that any thing

which is not might have been, is with them chimerical. Of course theodicy with them has no significance; they have no interest in the problem it proposes. Discounting, then, the law of necessity as having no application to the discussion, the question has sole respect to the permission of evil, postulating that evil is a contingency, a somewhat which God might have prevented. This postulate will be regarded as admissible by all who believe in the divine personality and in the doctrine of creation out of nothing. Evidently God might have refused to bring man into being, or having given him existence, might have refused to place him in the conditions of his earthly life. All created being might have been made subject to the law of necessity, and been constituted mechanically pure and happy; Omnipotence is competent by power to prevent the possibility of evil.

It is pertinent here to say that such a supposition, by which the possibility of sin and suffering is excluded, also excludes the possibility of rewardable virtue; it admits only automatic excellence; it excludes moral desert, merit, and demerit. The possibility of such an exclusion is conceivable, and the question remains as to the permission of what might have been prevented. How could a God of infinite goodness gain the consent of his own mind to bring into existence a race of beings under the possibility of sin and consequent suffering,

especially when he foresaw that many of those to be created beings would certainly sin, and consequently suffer? How can the existence of evil be reconciled with the goodness of God? Optimism solves the question by affirming that evil is the necessary antecedent of good. To the optimist "evil is not a mystery, but a means selected from the infinite resource to make the most of us. The fact of sin unlocked the door to highest destiny. In the throng of evils that assail us, there are none that yield their strength to virtue's struggling arm with such munificent reward of power as great temptations. We may win by toil, endurance; saintly fortitude by pain; by sickness, patience; faith and trust by fear." Without injury there could be no forgiveness; without anger, no meekness; without perverseness, no longsuffering; without poverty, no charity; without storms and tempests, no clear air. The maxim of optimism that "whatever is, is best," not only reconciles the existence of evil with the divine goodness, but it also makes evil a natural and necessary outflowing of the infinite benevolence; yea, more, it is that without which the divine good-will could not be manifest. Evil is the necessary antecedent to at least some forms of good.

In support of this theory, it is further said that from the infinite possibilities omniscience could select the best, omnipotence is competent to pro-

duce that best, and infinite goodness must, from the necessity of its nature, prompt the selection and production of it; therefore, throughout the universe, the best possible state of things is existent—"whatever is, is best." Now, are these things so? Are God and the universe under obligations to Satan for his rebellion? Are everlasting anthems of grateful praise due to sin for the benefits and blessings it has rendered possible and actual? I trow not.

Sin, the source of evil, and itself the chief of all evils, is that which God hates—which he has forbidden and will punish; it is that which all good angels and good men deprecate and deplore; it is that on account of which all sinners are in infinite peril and should repent, and for which, in the want of repentance, they will suffer punishments inconceivably great. The arguments by which the support of the theory is attempted are fallacious. The good that comes of evil might have been, though in other forms, without it. The angels who kept their first estate are not miserable or less holy and happy because they did not sin. God is infinitely holy and happy without any shadow of turning—without any dependence upon evil or connection with it. Good-will, love with all its fruits, might have subsisted between man and man though all were "holy, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing;" nay, more, the more holy

rational and sentient beings are, the more perfect their mutual love, and the sweeter and more blessed their communion one with another. Again, the good that comes of evil is not due to the evil itself, but to the overruling grace and providence of God. Evil is wholly evil, only evil, and that continually. Its nature is destructive; nothing good can come of it, *per se*; it is not the necessary antecedent of good; sustains no relation to it that is of the nature of, or is assimilated to, that of cause and effect. The strength of the oak has come from the violence of the winds which have swept over the mountain on which it stands, but the natural tendency of the wind was to uproot the tree. It stands, because it had life in itself. That that life has made the violence of the storm the occasion of its development does not prove that the wind was the cause of the life; contrariwise, the life is in spite of the winds, and perhaps might have been developed as well or better without them. However it may be with the tree, it is so with virtue. Virtue lives only in the absence of sin, and lives the better in the absence of sin's consequences. If the wrath of man ever praise God, it is because the power of God causeth it to praise him, not because there is in the wrath itself any thing tending either to the glory of God or the good of men. If the afflictions of the present life work for the saints, in the life to come, "a far

more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," it is not because there is any redeeming and sanctifying virtue in the afflictions themselves, but because the grace of God in Christ Jesus makes those afflictions the occasions of its manifestation; it is the grace and not the sorrow that sanctifies and glorifies.

Again, the maxim that "whatever is, is best," is not proved, nor in the light of human science can it be; for first, it is not certain that among actually existing things there is any best; contrariwise, it is not possible to conceive of any actual state of things to which Omnipotence might not add something. But secondly, granting that among infinite possibilities there is a best which may become actual, it is not certain that the present state of things is that best. Is it said that the argument from the divine attributes above given proves that it is, we reply, that argument assumes that benevolence is the end of creation—that the purpose for which God created the universe was the communication of happiness to his creatures. Now, it is not competent for human reason to affirm that this was the end of creation; for all that man knows to the contrary, some other, such as the glory of God, the manifestation of himself, might have been the purpose for which, in the counsels of infinite wisdom, he decreed the existence of what his power has called

into being. Thirdly, conceding that among actualities there may be a best; that benevolence, or the good of the created, is the end of creation; and that therefore the present state of the universe is that best, we still insist that it is not the best in the sense of optimism. Sin and misery are not the necessary antecedent of good. The present state of the universe, if the best, is so in spite of sin and misery, and not because of them—is so because it is better that rewardable virtue should be, even though by its possibility punishable vice be also made possible, than that such virtue should not be; and is so again because it is better that a redemption should be provided for, when sin is made possible, even though the necessity of its application be found in the actuality of sin, than that such redemption should not be provided. The good of moral desert and the glory of a provided redemption are the real excellencies inherent in the present system of the universe, and these might be without sin or misery; these excellencies, in spite of sin and misery, are what render the present state of things the best.

Does the optimist reply, that this is all that he intends—all that his system involves? then we close the controversy. If the glory be given to the grace of God through Jesus Christ for all the good that is; if sin be deplored, repented of, abandoned, denounced as that which ought not to

be and might not have been, which is antagonistic to the good and is itself evil, and only evil, and that continually, then, and in that case, it may be truthfully said not only that "all things work together for good to them that love God," but also ultimately "every knee shall bow and every tongue confess" to the glory of God the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ that he hath done all things well. Optimism in this sense is orthodox and Scriptural.

That form of optimism, or rather that extravagant theory of the divine sovereignty which teaches that evil and sin are, because "God decreed" them—because "he prefers sin to holiness in all cases where it occurs," especially when the idea of the divine decree includes or implies a divine efficiency effecting or securing the execution of the decree, since it distinctly makes God the author of sin, must be pronounced as simply blasphemous. Nor does it make void this just judgment to affirm, that God has decreed sin and prefers it to holiness where it occurs, because in his infinite wisdom he sees that sin, in all cases where he decrees it, will be for the best; for this affirmation is a pure assumption, contradicted by every just and legitimate idea of the nature and tendency of sin. It is pertinent here to remark that Augustinianism, as formulated by Calvin, has been understood by all anti-Calvinists as teaching this form of optimism; but it is due to many, if not to

most of those who adopt the Calvinistic symbols, to say that they repudiate the idea that God is the author of sin. "God has decreed whatsoever comes to pass, yet so as thereby God is not the author of sin, nor is the contingency of second causes taken away, but rather is established." Leaving, then, the abettors of this theory to adjust its logical difficulties in their own minds as best they can, we affirm that referring the existence of evil to the decree of God, either with or without the optimistic idea that sin was decreed because it was seen to be for the best, is simply blasphemous; it makes God the author of sin—a theory more detrimental to morals and religion than professed fatalism itself.

The theory, that infinite goodness prompted or permitted the existence of evil because it is for the best, is relieved somewhat of its difficulties by the affirmation that evil is temporary. The Universalist theodicy is optimistic, modified by a relieving clause which affirms that sin and its consequences having wrought out a substantial and remunerating good for the universe, will finally come to an end. It is sufficient for our present purpose to say of this theory that it is not proved; contrariwise, it is affirmed of "many" that they "shall seek to enter in and shall not be able." On the authority of this declaration of our Lord, we affirm that whatever may become of the finally impenitent,

they will not attain unto eternal life—they will have no part in the salvation of the Gospel; therefore, to them sin is an infinite evil, at least in the sense that it causes the loss of an infinite good. The same remark may be made of the theodicy of annihilationism; the theory is not proved, and the annihilated, if there be any such, will, by reason of their sins, suffer the loss of eternal life. That which perils the possibility of an infinite good is itself an evil inconceivably great, and in all cases where the peril becomes fatal, the evil is infinite, though considered only in the light of what is lost. The annihilation of the sinner does not annihilate the evil of sin; it therefore leaves the question of theodicy unanswered.

The theory of pre-existence has been put forth by some as a solution of this problem, and may deserve a passing notice. It is alleged that no theory of sin and salvation which postulates man's earthly life as the commencement of his being reconciles the existing facts of human history with the goodness of God; that our intuitive ideas of honor and right demand that all newly created beings be such, and be so circumstanced, as that their chance for virtue and happiness shall greatly outweigh their liabilities to vice and misery, which, it is alleged, is not true of the character and condition of man in this life. It is further claimed that if a pre-existent state be supposed, and it be

also assumed that all the demands of honor and right were met in the primeval character and condition of man in that pre-existent state, and that in those circumstances he sinned, and that he is sent into this world either as a punishment for his sins or as a place of recovery from them, then the whole question of theodicy is solved; the difficulties in reconciling human sin and misery with the goodness of God disappears. First, it is obvious that this is pure theory—utterly destitute of proof; its only claim to consideration is found in the assumption that it is a theory which explains the difficulties of the case. Second, when our Lord's disciples asked him concerning the man born blind whether his blindness was a punishment for pre-existent sin, he answered that it was not. Third, the theory, instead of solving the problem, only removes it to another sphere of action. Though it be admitted that this world is a penitentiary for the punishment of criminals, or a reform school for the reformation of hopeful transgressors, and that the disabilities of the present life are deserved visitations for past sins, the question still remains, How is it consistent with the idea that God is infinitely good, that he should have permitted those pre-existent sins of which the present evil is a consequent? The question of theodicy is irrespective of time or place. How anywhere in the immensity of space, at any time in the eternity of duration,

an infinitely perfect being could consent to and permit the evil of sin and the endless train of terrible consequences which inevitably follow it, is the question under discussion, and evidently this theory of pre-existence does not so much as refer to it, much less answer it. Fourth, if it be said that the question is not the abstract question of the existence of evil, but the specific question of God's dealings with man in the present life, the question whether the evils man suffers under the sun be a bar to faith in the unlimited goodness of God, it may be replied, since we have no knowledge of pre-existent sin, at best we are compelled to assume it; the assumption is no aid to present thought; it is not a satisfactory adjustment of the case; the assumption is fruitless as well as baseless. If the theory of pre-existence be true we do not know it, and it is of no service to assume it.

Orthodox writers when discussing the doctrine of the divine goodness, generally regard the question of evil as having sole reference to this life, and the inquiry proposed is, simply whether the sufferings endured by animals and men during their earthly existence is an objection to the doctrine of the divine goodness. It is obvious that the argument considered in this light is of but little value logically; it is useful for purposes of illustration, and may sometimes relieve a mind perplexed with the clouds and darkness that surround

the throne of the divine administrator of human affairs. That God is good is implied in our intuitive apprehensions of his nature; no man can propose to himself the proposition that God is malevolent or vindictive, and for a moment believe that what he proposes is true; nor can a man rationally indulge the thought that God is indifferent as to man's well-being. If argument be needed, it is at hand, brief and conclusive: God is either malignant, indifferent, or benevolent. That he is malignant no man can believe, even though he himself be so wicked as to desire it. If God were indifferent as to human welfare, misery would be as prevalent as its opposite; but all men know that the contrary is the truth—happiness is the rule, misery the exception; therefore, God is benevolent. Again, contrivance proves design, and the predominant tendency of the contrivance indicates the disposition of the designer. The world abounds with contrivances, all of which are directed to beneficial purposes. Evil exists, but is never the object of contrivance. Teeth are contrived to eat, not to ache; and though the aching be inseparable from the contrivance, it is not its object. The existence of animals that are venomous, and of animals that prey one upon another, seems to be evidence of evil design in the contrivance; but though we are unable to show that it is not, it would still be but an unexplained

exception of diminutive importance. Death must come to animals in some way; perhaps in all cases where it occurs, death by violence is better for the dying than death by decay or acute disease. Apparent, or, if required, real exceptions being admitted, the general experience of mankind and the constitution and management of all things under the sun indicate benevolent designs and illustrate the benevolent intent of the designer. In considering the question of earthly evils in their relation to the divine goodness, the following considerations must be taken into account:

First, most of the sufferings of the present life are self-imposed. Did all men use their best diligence to acquaint themselves with the laws of their being, and knowing those laws, faithfully observe them, the amount of suffering would be reduced to a well-nigh infinitesimal quantity. Second, under the provisions of grace, a peace of mind is attainable over which no outward circumstance has any control. "Great peace have they that love thy law, and nothing shall offend them." It is possible for a man so to trust that "all things work together for good;" that the sufferings of this present time will be "but for a moment," and will "work out a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory," as that his peace "shall be as a river." In a word, under the provisions of grace, all that is essential

to human happiness is independent of outward conditions.

The question of theodicy in its broader significance, including the origin and existence of evil, not only upon earth but also anywhere in the universe, and at any time in eternity, is so inseparably connected with the topic now under discussion that it can not be avoided. Whence came evil? It is causeless, says the atheist; it came by chance; it is, because it has an equal chance with its opposite, or it is by eternal fate—is because it could not not be. Says the materialist, it is inherent in eternal matter. It is, says the dualist, by the agency of an eternal evil spirit. Says the pantheist, it is a part of the one divine eternal whole, whether of matter, or of spirit, or of both. It is by the decree of God, says the optimist; decreed because it has inherent in itself an essential necessary element of the greatest good. All these voices agree in affirming that evil is a necessity, made necessary either by the eternal nature of things or by the eternal nature of God. All theists, except the optimist, deny the necessity of evil and affirm that it is a contingency; a somewhat which might not have been. It is the creation of a creature, it is by the abuse of free-will; it is the creation of a creature endowed within limits with causative power, made under law, with freedom both to and from

acts of obedience or disobedience; having, with respect to these acts of voluntary obedience or disobedience, without limitation or restriction, the power of choice; fully able to stand in perpetual perfect loyalty, and free to fall into rebellion and transgression. Such a being thus endowed with an either-causal, alternative power, uses his free-will in acts of transgression—he disobeys a just command; disrespects righteous authority, violates a moral obligation, does what he ought not to do, leaves undone what he ought to do; this is sin, and sin is the cause and source of all evil.

Now what is the relation of God to such an act of sin, and to its consequent evil effects? God created the being who sinned, endowed him with the power by which he sinned, established the connection between sin and its consequences, and made provisions in his plan of government for the emergency of its occurrence. He did not interfere to prevent it, and on its occurrence he adjusted his administration to its existence. He exerts divine power for its punishment in accordance with the demands of justice, and through grace puts its results under contribution for the furtherance of his purposes of good will toward his creatures. It is sufficient for present purposes to say, in a word, sin and evil exist by the divine permission; and the question returns, How is this consistent with the divine benevolence? For the

sake of easy advances toward the difficulties of the problem, we first inquire, has man any just cause of complaint against the goodness of God, that he, man, has been permitted to come into being in the conditions and circumstances of his earthly life? To ask this question is to answer it; it is only the perversity of a depraved heart, not the decision of an enlightened judgment, that says God "is a hard master, reaping where he hath not sown, and gathering where he has not strewed."

Now, why is it that no man intelligently complains against God? is it because evil does not exist? By no means. It were evident folly to assume that the present life is a condition of paradisaical perfection and happiness. Man is born to toil, to hardship, to sickness, to suffering, to sorrow, and to death; his lot is upon him, and he can not avoid it. Why, then, does he not complain against his Maker? Evidently because there is ever present with him an all-sufficient remedy for his ills; not a means of removing evil, but an adequate support under it. Provisions, by which that which for the present is not joyous but grievous may, to those who are exercised thereby, work the peaceable fruits of righteousness, are evidently always at hand. Man through these remedial provisions may, notwithstanding his burden of earthly ills, certainly secure the highest end of his being; may attain unto the perfection of his

nature, and enjoy the highest happiness of which he is capable. Thus far the case is a plain one. God's goodness in his administration of human affairs is fully sustained by the provisions of the remedial dispensation; it was not unkind in God that in the beginning he endowed man with free-will, and thus made sin possible, nor that he did not interfere to prevent sin when man, being thus created, was tempted thereto, because he provided an adequate, all-sufficient, and every-where present, remedy for sin and for all its evil consequences.

But now it will be said that, as to all those intelligent beings who keep their first estate, who never sin and therefore never know sorrow, and as to all those who, having sinned, have a knowledge of the provided remedy, and avail themselves of it, and thereby attain unto eternal life, it is manifest that as to them existence is a blessing, and great goodness was evinced by their creation with such infinite and infinitely glorious possibilities before them; but as to those who sin, who reject all remedies, who frustrate the grace of God, who miss the end of their being, who lose eternal life, who suffer the penalty due to sin, how is the goodness of God to be vindicated in their case? was it an act of kindness in God to bring such into being? how could the infinite will obtain the consent of unlimited goodness to call intelligent, sentient beings into existence, before

whom such a destiny was not only possible, but was foreseen to be certain? It is not uncommon to reply that as it was better that eternal life should be made possible to finite beings even at the expense of eternal death to some, to whom no injustice is done, to whom eternal life is as possible as to others, and whose destiny is their due and self-imposed, than that eternal life should be denied to all that is not God; it was an act of kindness and good-will in the great Creator to confer upon the universe such a blessing as the possibility of rewardable virtue and the possible attainment of eternal life by finite beings. But to this it may be objected that in any view that may be taken of it, it represents God as causing or at least permitting some to suffer for the benefit of others. Is it still insisted in reply that they who suffer are not constrained, but choose their destiny of their own free-will; that they receive only that which is justly their due? this doubtless is an adequate vindication of the divine justice in the punishment of transgressors whose existence is postulated, but does not reach the question of the divine goodness in the creation of those whose ruin is foreseen.

As a solution of the difficult problem now under consideration, it is sometimes said that existence under any conditions that infinite goodness will permit must be better than non-existence. This, if

admitted, solves the problem, divine goodness is vindicated, and all the difficulties in the case disappear.

But it is objected that this teaches the doctrine of a tolerable hell, minifies the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and contradicts what our Lord said of Judas, that it were better for him if he had not been born. In reply, it may be said that existence, though involving evil inconceivably great, may be better than non-existence. Thousands in this world are in conditions which other thousands pronounce worse than non-existence, but they themselves struggle hard and do their utmost to perpetuate their being—it may be through the fear of something worse, but more likely, in most cases, from an inherent natural love of conscious life. Sin may be declared to be exceeding sinful because it is offensive to God, whatever be its consequences to the sinner himself; and it is so again, because to the sinner it is a bar to the attainment of an infinite good, and is the source of an evil inconceivably great, even though it do not wholly overbalance the bliss of being. Possibly the words of our Lord respecting Judas may be a figurative representation of a severe judgment for the sin of the betrayal, without any special reference to eternal destiny, or any comparison between his existence as it was, and the condition of non-existence. If these objections be successfully removed, the thought presents itself with inherent plausibility;

existence under any condition that infinite goodness will permit is better than non-existence; or, in other words, a God of infinite goodness could not confer existence upon a being to whom he foresaw existence would be a curse. Again, God is the source of good and not of evil; he is the author of our being; therefore, being is a blessing and not a curse. The thought is not only inherently plausible, but it also seems to be sustained by the frequent declarations of Scripture that God in Christ is "the Savior of all men." He is so in that he made the salvation of all men possible; but if that possibility was a foreseen curse to any, how can it be said that he is the Savior of such? Without a Savior, the race had perished in the first pair. The conscious existence, then, of all the posterity, is by Christ, and in that sense is he the Savior of all men. But if conscious existence were in any case worse than non-existence, in what sense, in such cases, is Christ a Savior? The thought that existence is, to every being God has created, better than non-existence, and must be so while existence is continued, not only vindicates the divine goodness in creation, notwithstanding the evils that do now, and will hereafter exist; but it also, while it does not compromise the divine justice by any supposed neglect or failure adequately to sustain the moral government of the universe in the punishment of sinners for their sins, relieves systematic theology from the

greatest of all its burdens—the supposition of an eternity of unmixed and unmitigated misery. If sin can be adequately punished, and yet the sinner continue to exist under circumstances in which his being is, on the whole, a blessing, many difficulties, otherwise inexplicable to human thought, will disappear.

But as was said in the beginning of this discussion, probably no solution of the question of theodicy yet proposed is satisfactory to any appreciable portion of thinkers upon the subject. That God is good, no man can reasonably doubt; that evil exists, all men know certainly; that the two are reconcilable one with the other is, therefore, beyond question; but how, to human thought, they are to be reconciled, is yet a question, and it may so remain till God himself, in the final issues of man's earthly history, shall vindicate his ways, and every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that God hath done all things well.

HOLINESS.

“Speak unto all the congregation of the children of Israel and say unto them, Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy. There is none holy as the Lord. Thou art not a God that hath pleasure in wickedness, neither shall evil dwell with thee. But thou art holy, thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel. Exalt ye the Lord

our God and worship at his footstool, for he is holy. Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts. Thou art of purer eyes than to behold evil, and canst not look on iniquity. And they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come. Holy and reverend is his name. Who shall not fear thee, O Lord, and glorify thy name? for thou art holy.”

The term holiness, in its generic sense, means conformity to law; the term righteousness is frequently used in the same sense; it may have respect either to character or conduct, but is specifically used most generally with reference to character.

Our idea of holiness in God has an anthropopathic origin. We have our ideas of right and wrong in ourselves and in our fellow-men. A man whose practices, principles, and sympathies are on the side of virtue, we call a good man—a holy man. Virtue in man is always limited and imperfect. In thought we remove all limitations and imperfections from the idea of virtue as we find it in men, and this is our best idea of holiness in God. It is a trait in the divine character; it is a characteristic of the divine nature by which he approves of the right and condemns the wrong, always with perfect rectitude and with infinite intensity. Virtue and vice in man have respect to

law—to the will of another who, by reason of existing relations, is endowed with legislative authority; hence the question arises whether holiness or virtue in God has respect to law, or is God so a law unto himself as that this idea of conformity to law must be eliminated from the conception of divine holiness? Our answer to this question, as already given in another connection, is, that there is nothing anterior or exterior to God that can be thought of as controlling him, or determining in any sense what he is, or what he does. His will is the universal law. It is sufficient for all purposes of truth or science in ethics and religion to say this or that is right, because it is God's will that *it* and not its opposite should be, and this or that is wrong because God has forbidden it—it is his will that it should not be; and yet it is not competent for human thought to conceive of right and wrong as so founded upon the divine will, as that we may conceive it possible for God to reverse the case. Mutual love is obligatory among social beings, because it is God's will they should love one another; and yet it is inconceivable that God could so will, that it would be right and obligatory that social beings should hate each the other. It is not only true that this or that is right because God wills it, but it is also true that God wills it because it is right. There are eternal, immutable principles in ethics and religion, as there

are in mathematics and philosophy. God is infinitely holy, then, not merely because he is in perfect and eternal harmony with himself, but also because he is in perfect and eternal harmony with the principles of truth and righteousness; or, if the term is preferred, with "the eternal fitness of things." It pertains to his essential nature that he forever approves of, and delights in, whatsoever is pure and of good report; whatsoever is true, beautiful, and good; whatsoever is in harmony with his own purposes of infinite wisdom, goodness, and truth; whatsoever is for his glory and the good of his creatures; and he forever disapproves and is displeased with whatsoever is opposed to these things. His approval of virtue and love of the virtuous, his disapproval of vice and displeasure toward the vicious, is with an infinite intensity, and in perfect correspondence with the true and real character of whatsoever may be the objects of his loves or aversions. The holiness of God! the infinite purity! what shall represent it? by what illustrations shall man aid his feeble thoughts? who shall stand in such a presence? can sinful man, with mortal vision, gaze upon glory so resplendent? Angels, archangels, cherubim, and seraphim veil their faces and continually cry "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord God of hosts; heaven and earth are full of thy glory." The Church triumphant and militant in responsive wor-

ship, adoringly answer, "Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen."

JUSTICE.

Justice, considered as an attribute of God, is that in the divine nature which prompts God to exact and to render that which is due. As Creator, he has the right of proprietorship, and therefore the authority to command. Obedience is his due, and it is contrary to the nature and character of God to do otherwise than insist upon his right to be obeyed; that is, God is just; he exacts what is due. Man, a creature wholly of the divine will, made in the image of God's personality, a sentient being, capable of pleasure and of pain, has a natural right to expect that his Creator will give him fair opportunities for rendering the service due, and that in case of his faithful obedience, will secure for him such exemption from pain, and the enjoyment of such measures of pleasure and happiness, as the nature given him requires. This happiness in case of obedience God renders—he is just. In case of disobedience, whatever is due, whether it be penalty considered as due to the rebellious because of what rebellion is in itself, or because of the authority disregarded, or because of God's right to be obeyed, or because of the

injury done or peril incurred, or because of all these and other reasons, whatever is due for whatever consideration, justice demands that this should be rendered.

Justice, psychologically considered—regarded as a phenomenon of mind, sometimes called the sense of justice—is a sentiment or state of the sensibility, and arises intuitively on a presentation by the intellect of the facts in the case or the relations of the parties concerned. It belongs to the same class of mental states as the sense of the beautiful, the good, the true, the suitable, fit, or proper arising in the same way on the occurrence of the requisite occasion. Men may differ as to what may seem to them just or unjust; some may pronounce a given transaction an act of injustice, when others would declare the same thing indifferent, or perhaps even an act of justice. This difference arises from a different apprehension of the case; but if the intellect presents to the sensibilities precisely the same facts, the decision will, in all cases, be the same. The principles of truth, justice, and righteousness are invariable, immutable; and the mental constitution which apprehends those principles is the same in nature, whether it be human, angelic, or divine. Finite knowledge can not cognize all the facts and relations of any transaction; the most minute occurrence of life may have moral influences and

relations affecting the moral government of the universe lying beyond finite cognitions and reaching far out into measureless duration; hence, because of various limitations in knowledge, there may be various decisions as to what is right and just in given cases; but the decisions of the moral sense are universally in harmony with the facts presented—the *thing* pronounced just is just; it may not be the thing supposed—and so far forth erroneous—but the decisions of the moral nature are universally truthful.

Our idea of the sense of justice as it exists in the divine mind is our idea of the same sense as it exists in the human mind—the same in kind, differentiated chiefly in two respects: God's knowledge of the persons concerned and the facts involved, with all their relations, is perfect; man's limited; God's sense of justice and righteousness is infinite and perfect as to intensity, man's feeble because of the limitations of a finite capacity, and it may be because of the obscurities of a depravation. So far forth as man knows, he knows; knowledge is knowledge, whether human or divine, and a sense of right is a sense of right. It is vain to say that it is presumption in man to judge of what is just in God. God appeals to men's sense of justice for a vindication of his ways and a condemnation of theirs. "Are not my ways equal and your ways unequal? saith the Lord." It is

not uncommon to speak of justice as though it were of different kinds: as commutative or commercial, that subsisting between equals in the relations of trade and commerce, domestic and social life; legislative, that pertaining to the enactment of laws, with their sanctions of reward and punishment; judicial, defining and applying laws, especially in cases of transgression; vindictive, exacting penalty in cases where obligation to punishment has been incurred; but justice is one and the same thing in all cases—it is rendering what is due—the difference is only in the subjects to which it is applied. As all men are sinners, the justice of God, considered in his relations to man and in his administration of human affairs, is revealed chiefly in its relations to sin. Systematic divinity, therefore, mainly considers the divine justice as manifested in the punishment of sin. What is precisely due the transgressor of God's law for his transgression, human thought is not competent to apprehend—no being but God fully knows all the relations and interests involved in the case; and in the teachings of revelation the demerits of sin and the penalties of law are so stated that there is opportunity for honest differences of opinion; hence the many different theories of sin and salvation advanced and advocated among Christian believers. But though a complete and exhaustive science is not attainable, there is, nevertheless, in the common

convictions of mankind and in the teachings of the inspired writings, sufficient ground for the construction of a system of soteriological truth, reliable and adequate to all the practical and experimental purposes needful for salvation.

It is not fruitless to inquire, What are the demerits of sin? What are the penalties annexed to the law of God? What is due to sin? What does the justice of God obligate him to render in cases of transgression? These questions are all the same in import; the answer is one and the same. Perhaps a key to the proper answer will be found when we find what is the purpose for which penalty is threatened, and, when incurred, executed. Plainly, the chief end of government among men, or of earthly civil government, is the protection of life, liberty, property, and reputation; or, in other words, the public weal. Laws are enacted and penalties annexed to operate as a motive to deter the tempted in the time of his temptation from the violation of his neighbor's rights, and in case of transgression the threatened penalty is executed, lest law, as a motive, should lose its force in the public mind. The thief is incarcerated not solely because he has stolen and that he may steal no more, but also that others may not steal; the deserter is shot not solely because he has deserted, but that others may not desert. When the judge pronounces the sentence of the law, and the chief

magistrate executes it, prompted thereto by their obligation to protect the commonwealth—to secure the end of law above described—they are said to administer justice. Justice, regarded in this view, is called administrative justice. But it is manifest that when an individual citizen is made to suffer solely for the benefit of others, an injustice is done him. The thief, unless he himself deserves imprisonment, can not be justly imprisoned for the protection of other people's property. In all cases of just administration the culprit must himself deserve the penalty inflicted upon him; this is called retributive justice. It is evident that this must underlie all administration, or there is no justice in the case.

The question remains, why does the sinner deserve to suffer? Why does the thief deserve to be incarcerated, the deserter shot, or the murderer hung? Is it said that the fact of sin proves the disposition to sin, and that therefore it is just to the sinner to secure him against the possibility of repeating his transgression? It may be replied that this is but an end of administrative justice, and requires an underlying basis the same as above. He suffers for the benefit of others, which is unjust, unless he deserves to suffer. Again, if the disposition to sin is just ground for the execution of the penalty due to crime, could that disposition be proved without the sin, a man

innocent of the act might be punished for the act. Governmental ends can not be the sole basis of penal sanctions; it is evidently right and just that the public weal should be protected; it would be unjust to the citizens of the commonwealth if it were not; it is right and just for the protection of others that the culprit be deprived of the opportunity of repeating his crimes, and that crime be discouraged in the public mind by the prompt execution of threatened penalties; but these things can not justly be unless the culprit deserve his doom.

Is it said that penalty is due as a remuneration for the injury done? The answer is obvious. In all cases where restitution is possible commutative justice requires that it be made; but this is not penalty: though the thief restore fourfold what he has stolen, he may yet be justly imprisoned for his theft; but in most cases restitution is impossible, and in no case is penalty a remuneration for the injury done by the crime. Is it said that the reformation of the culprit is the end of punishment; that the purposes of government, of law, and of penalty are all purely benevolent, and therefore justice is not at all to be taken into account? This is obviously incorrect. The reformation of the culprit may be sought in the administration of the government; but it is not the purpose of penalty. In most cases penalty

is not adapted to reformation; certainly hanging is not; imprisonment usually hardens, obdurates the culprit, strengthens and confirms his depravity. The truth is approached when it is said that the transgressor deserves the penalty inflicted, because he has violated obligation; because he has disregarded lawful and rightful authority; because he has done that which he ought not to do, or left undone that which he ought to do. This is evidently saying, sin has demerit in itself; that from the natural relation subsisting between rightful, just authority, and transgression, there necessarily and naturally arises an obligation to punishment. This is the universal conviction of the human mind—a verdict of guilty means more than that the accused performed the act alleged against him, it means that the criminal deserves the penalty threatened in the law. It means obligation to punishment. Sin in its nature has demerit; abstract justice, the eternal principle of right, has claims for the infliction of retributive sufferings. In cases of flagrant crime all men instinctively and intuitively feel that the criminal deserves to suffer, and not unfrequently in cases of outrageous criminality the whole community arise with simultaneous indignation and demand the prompt execution of the just penalties of violated law, without the least regard to the reformation of the culprit, or to the protection of

the common weal; perfectly independent of all antecedents and consequents, the outraged sense of justice demands the punishment of the criminal, because that outraged sense of justice, in the public mind, intuitively affirms that punishment is due for the sin, for the sin considered in itself, the sin is itself an insult to justice and the penalty a satisfaction to justice. This sense of a just demand for penal suffering in the mind of man, we have said above, is a miniature likeness to the sense of justice in the mind of God; it is primarily retributive and afterward administrative; what is retributively due to the sinner may be justly rendered—the governmental advantages accruing therefrom are subsequent subsidiary considerations. Whether under the divine administration, God's sense of justice obligates him to execute the full measure of retribution due to sin, or whether, as in the case of debts, that may be relinquished without injustice which might be justly demanded and exacted, will be hereafter considered under the head of soteriology.

It may not however be an unwise anticipation to say here, that if on Bible authority it may be affirmed that the death of Christ was a satisfaction to retributive justice, and that justification is an announcement by the judge, under law and according to law, that the demands of justice are satisfied, then it may be affirmed that divine

justice demands, exacts, executes without abatement or remission the full measure of retribution due to crime; but if the death of Christ be a satisfaction to administrative justice only, and if justification be solely executive clemency ordering the non-execution of penalty, then the idea of remission, forgiveness, pardon, may involve the idea that retributive justice consents to a relinquishment of its claims; such relinquishment being made possible without the violation of legal obligation or governmental claims by the death of Christ. Though it be considered conceivably possible that through an atonement securing all the ends of government, meeting all the obligations of the divine governor to the subjects of his government, the penal sufferings due to the justice of God, or which is the same thing, justly due to God himself, considered as an individual person, might, without injustice, be relinquished; or, to state the same thing in another form, though it be conceivable that God may not render the full measure of ill due to his creatures, it is not conceivable that he will ever fail to render the full measure of good. Whatever of good is due from God to his creatures, yea, through mercy and grace infinitely more, will always and every-where be faithfully and exactly rendered. God is just, and though heaven and earth pass away, his word of promise and the assurances of his holiness shall never fail.

“A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he; the righteous Lord loveth righteousness; he loveth righteousness and judgment; justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne; even so, Lord God Almighty, true and righteous are thy judgments.”

The Bible ascribes to God all possible perfections in an infinite degree. He is not only wise, holy, just, true, and righteous altogether, but he is also merciful, compassionate, and long suffering; “his mercy endureth forever; the Lord is gracious and full of compassion; gracious is the Lord and righteous, yea, our God is merciful, slow to anger and of great mercy; with him is plenteous redemption. It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. The Lord, the Lord God merciful and gracious, long suffering and abundant in goodness.” God is love. “He that loveth not, knoweth not God, for God is love, and we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.”

CHAPTER III.

TRINITY.

HITHERTO we have been discussing topics involving truths and doctrines which, whether discoverable by the unaided reason of man or not, are such as when once discovered are, on rational grounds, admitted to be true. Some of them are intuitively accepted; others, though requiring arguments, are found, on examination, to be so nearly self-evident that the process of demonstration is brief, and the argument is obvious to the common mind. The doctrines of natural religion and the evidences of Christianity are addressed primarily to the logical faculty, and the proofs adduced are conclusive. In the light of reason the doctrines taught are true. There is a God possessed of all possible perfections in an infinite degree—a personal First Cause, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things. Man is made in the image of his Maker; is a moral and responsible being; the life he lives under the sun is probationary to a life to come. God has, in the

writings of Holy Scriptures, made a revelation of his will concerning man. Of the truth of these doctrines of natural religion, and of the fact of a revelation, man may be convinced beyond reasonable doubt by arguments easily apprehended by the common intelligence.

We now approach a doctrine of pure revelation—a doctrine at once the central idea, the fundamental truth, and the greatest mystery of the Christian system. It distinguishes Christianity from all other systems of religion—is peculiar to it; its proofs are found wholly in the revealed Word, and the argument is purely exegetical; the only question in respect to it is, What is the testimony of the sacred writings? The reasoning faculties are employed in the discussing of this doctrine, first, in determining the question of the inspiration of the Scriptures. Having found adequate grounds for the affirmation, in the light of reason, that what the Bible says God says, then, secondly, the reasonable inquiry is, What is the Bible testimony as to the doctrine under discussion? Thus it is evident that though the doctrine be a doctrine of faith above reason, and outside of argumentation on rational grounds, it is not therefore unreasonable or contrary to reason. Faith founded on a “Thus saith the Lord,” if founded on adequate reasons for believing that the Lord has thus said, is a reasonable faith.

The creed of the Methodist Episcopal Church on the doctrine of the Trinity, as expressed in its "Articles of Religion," is as follows:

"ART. 1. *Of Faith in the Holy Trinity.*—There is but one living and true God, everlasting, without body or parts, of infinite power, wisdom, and goodness; the maker and preserver of all things, visible and invisible. And in unity of this Godhead there are three persons, of one substance, power, and eternity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.

"ART. 2. *Of the Word, or Son of God, who was made very man.*—The Son, who is the Word of the Father, the very and eternal God, of one substance with the Father, took man's nature in the womb of the blessed virgin; so that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and manhood, were joined together in one person, never to be divided, whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for the actual sins of men.

"ART. 3. *Of the Resurrection of Christ.*—Christ did truly rise again from the dead, and took again his body, with all things appertaining to the perfection of man's nature, wherewith he ascended into heaven, and there sitteth until he return to judge all men at the last day.

"ART. 4. *Of the Holy Ghost.*—The Holy Ghost, proceeding from the Father and the Son, is of one substance, majesty, and glory with the Father and the Son, very and eternal God."

The Apostles' Creed, so called, is in the following words:

"I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth; and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy

Ghost; born of the Virgin Mary; suffered under Pontius Pilate; was crucified, dead, and buried. He descended into hell. The third day he rose from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.”

The Nicene Creed, like the Apostolic, makes the unity of God, the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ and of the Holy Ghost—the distinction of three persons in one God—its chief burden, mentioning very briefly other doctrines, as the resurrection of the body and eternal life. Its formula is as follows:

“I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible; and in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father by whom all things were made, who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man, and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered and was buried,

and the third day he rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end. And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and giver of life, who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; who, with the Father and the Son together, is worshiped and glorified; who spake by the prophets. And I believe in one catholic and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come. Amen.”

The so-called Athanasian Creed contains, among other similar formulas, the following: “We worship one God in trinity, and trinity in unity, neither confounding the persons nor dividing the substance; the person of the Father is one, of the Son another, of the Holy Spirit another; but the divinity of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit is one, the glory equal, the majesty equal; the Father is God, the Son God, and the Holy Spirit God; and yet there are not three Gods, but one God only.”

Such are the symbols of the Church, the youngest and the oldest; and the prevailing opinion of the Church during all the ages of ecclesiastical history is as well expressed by these formulas as by any proposed either in ancient or modern

times. The central thought is expressed by the term trinity—three in one; one as to substance, three as to persons—eternally, immutably one, yet such as admits of a distinction; in some sense one, in another sense three.

The creeds of the Church were constructed for a defense against the heresies which arose from time to time. The Patripassians denied the three persons, asserted that there is but one person in the Godhead; that one person conceived of in his abstract simplicity and eternity, is the Father; the same person incarnate is the Son. This heresy arose in the second century of the Christian Era, attained to such a prominence and importance that it engaged the pen of Tertullian, and was the occasion of Church discipline and excommunications.

Sabellius, who flourished from about A. D. 250 to 260, taught that the Son and Holy Spirit were not persons, but powers, or manifestations of God. This form of antitrinitarianism prevailed extensively for a time, and doubtless in all the ages has had, and even now has, an influence with individual thinkers, though Sabellianism has, during many centuries of Christian history, been regarded by the great majority of believers as among the most dangerous of heresies. Humanitarianism, called, since the time of Socinus, Socinianism, denying the divinity of Christ in any and every sense, and asserting that Christ was a mere man, obtained to a

limited extent in the early Church, and has continued always within very narrow limits to the present time. Nominal trinitarianism, strongly maintained by Origen (born A. D. 185), confesses the unity of God and the trinity of persons, but ascribes to Christ not essential deity, but a sort of divinity. He is God, but not *the* God; he is God, but not God himself. The essence of the divine Logos was begotten of the Father by an eternal generation, but was not the same as the essence of the Father, but similar—*omoiousios*, not *omou-sios*; Christ was *theos*, not *ho theos*.

Arius, who flourished from about A. D. 311 onward, taught that there was a time when Christ was not—that he is a created being, but is the first created and the greatest, next to God, endowed with delegated power to create, govern, save, and judge the world. The prevalence and power of Arianism occasioned the convocation of many synods, and employed some of the most acute and profound intellects the Church has ever seen. The struggles invoked by it and carried on through many years under the leadership of Athanasius, issued, together with the results of previous struggles, especially those in the contest with Origenism, in the scientific statements of the doctrine of the trinity found in the formulas of the Church, and constituting the creed of orthodoxy, during the centuries intervening between that time

and the present. The construction of the creed resulted not from an attempt to improve upon, much less to add to, the teachings of the Scriptures; but from an effort so to state the Bible doctrine as to defend the Church against the incoming of heresies.

The Apostolic Fathers were content with the formulas of the New Testament. They found in the baptismal formula and in the apostolic benediction a statement of the doctrine of God—of the Holy Trinity—that was satisfactory to their piety. In their writings no efforts are apparent that evince any desire for any thing more scientific, and doubtless if errors had not arisen the New Testament itself would have been the sole symbol of the militant Church. The issue, as it has been in all the ages of ecclesiastical history, and the issue as it now is, is distinctly and definitely stated in the question, Does the Bible teach that there are three persons in one God? or, does the Bible teach that the substance or essence of the Logos or pre-existent Christ is one and the same with the substance or essence of God the Father? The argument is purely and wholly an appeal “to the law and the testimony;” it is a question of exegesis, of interpretation. If the Bible does not teach the doctrine of the Trinity, the doctrine must be rejected, for it is not claimed that it can be maintained by rational evidences. Any attempt at

explanation, illustration, or argument from analogy or otherwise, must be worse than useless—must be injurious; for this mystery of the Godhead is evidently *sui generis*; there is nothing analogous, within the range of human knowledge; and without doubt there is not, and there can not be, any thing analogous existent anywhere in space, or at any time in duration. There is but one God, and there is not, and can not be, another—either another person or another thing that is so like him in this mystery of his nature that it may represent him. Hence explanations, illustrations, analogies, must mislead, as they direct thought to that which, if not contrary and opposite, is different and unlike. The only resort is “to the law and the testimony.” If it be inquired, What ought I to think of Christ? the answer will be found in the answer to the other question—What saith the Scripture?

But the inquirer has antecedent difficulties and objections. The idea that God has a son; that God can, or if he can, ever has or will become incarnate; that two natures, as the Godhead and manhood, can be so united as to become one person; above all, that God should in any sense or form suffer and die; especially that he would become incarnate, suffer, and die for so diminutive a being as man, are thoughts so abhorrent to the natural reason, says the doubter, that it seems

more consistent with truth, and more accordant with the limitations of human knowledge, to confess that we do not understand what the Bible says in passages which may seem to teach such doctrines, than to believe those doctrines true. Nay, more, says the unbeliever, if the Bible teach the doctrine of the Trinity, it is competent for human reason to affirm that because it teaches such things it is itself unworthy of confidence; yea, more, it is false—it is a deception and a fraud.

To consult the testimony of the Scriptures to ascertain whether they teach the orthodox theology is vain, says the objector, for we antecedently know that the doctrine can not be true; for, first, it is absurd; it teaches that three are one, which is an arithmetical absurdity, self-contradictory, impossible. Of course, though the evidences of Christianity were unanswerable and conclusive arguments, and were so apprehended that conviction were resistless; though not a doubt remained in regard to the inspiration of the Scriptures; though it be admitted beyond all question that the Scriptures do teach that three are one—that is, though beyond question God says in the Bible that three are one—it would even in that case be impossible for a sane mind to admit it as true, taking the statement in an arithmetical sense. Absurdities can not be believed, no matter who

states them—though an angel or even God. If the doctrine of the Trinity were an affirmation that three are one, in respect to the same thing, in the same sense; if it were affirmed that three Gods are one God, or that three persons are one person, then would the statement be arithmetically absurd, and could not be believed on any authority whatever. But evidently the millions of millions of Christian believers, who have professed faith in the doctrines of the Church, have not all of them been so insane as to profess faith in an absurdity, nor have they so stated their belief as to be justly chargeable with such insanity. The affirmation that there are three persons in one God, is an affirmation not that God is both three and one in the same sense, but that he is one as to essence and three as to persons—unity and trinality are affirmed of the same being, but in different senses. Or, again, the affirmation has respect to the manner of the divine subsistence, or at the most, to the inscrutable, ineffable nature of God, and affirms a distinction; or, again, the divine nature is such, or the manner of the divine subsistence is such, as admits of a distinction; that distinction is three—I, thou, he; Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. The Bible in many places expresses such a distinction, and in many others implies it. Dogmatic theology, for self-defense against heresy, marks that distinction, for the want of a better term, names it a

distinction of persons, and announces its interpretation in the language of the creed; certainly this is as distant from an absurdity as truth is from falsehood; as undeserving of such an accusation as innocence is undeserving of an accusation of crime.

But secondly, says the objector, the doctrine is unintelligible; so great a mystery that thought is bewildered by it; when one attempts to think what is meant by the term person as applied to God, especially when required to think of a distinct person who is not a distinct being, to think of three persons each of which is God, and yet there are not three Gods, but one God, the whole effort is worse than fruitless, it is confounding. The thing proposed seems unthinkable; and further, says the objector, to require faith in a dogma so far outside the range of thought, so far above the possibility of human apprehension as a condition of Church fellowship, is illiberal, bigoted, narrow-minded. Orthodoxy is Pharisaic, when it insists upon such a dogma. In reply it must be conceded, if it be a concession, that the doctrine is incomprehensible. The word trinity means more than man can know; how there can be three persons, properly so-called, that are not three beings, no man is able to tell; what can be the nature of any conceivable distinction in the essence of the divine being is above the reach of finite thought.

This is beyond question a mystery; doubtless the greatest of mysteries; it is unspeakable; if it be pleasing that we so say, it is unthinkable. But it is not therefore untrue, nor is it therefore not a proper object of faith, of faith as to the fact, though not as to the fullness of import and mystery of manner. Exhaustive conceptions and comprehensions of the *quo modo* are not attainments of human thought, whatever be the topic of the thinking. Inability to conceive things exhaustively and to comprehend their manner is not confined to the mysteries of the trinity, nor to other mysteries of religion; but is common to all topics of discourse and reflection through the whole range of human science. When I say mind moves muscle, I say what I know by consciousness is true; and yet there is more involved in what I say than I can know. When I say God is a spirit infinite in all possible perfections, I am persuaded by reasons apprehended in rational thought that I say something, and that that something is true; and yet I do not know what I say. In like manner, when I say there are three persons in one God—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; one in essence, three in a distinction of persons,—I am persuaded, by the evidence of inspiration, and the laws of interpretation, by adequate reasons for believing that God has so said, that what I say is true, though I do not understand the full

import of the words I use, and though I know nothing and can believe nothing as to the manner of the fact stated.

The charge of illiberality for insisting upon faith in the Holy Trinity as a condition of Church fellowship must be pronounced more illiberal than the thing charged would be if it were true; for, first, it is not true that the Church requires faith in what can not be understood; it requires faith in a fact distinctly announced; faith founded on the Word of God, simply a belief in what God has said; it does not attempt to explain the mystery of the fact. The believer is not required to know or believe any thing about that which is mysterious; the unthinkable is not presented as a matter of apprehension or belief. On the authority of the Word of God, the Church announces the fact of the Holy Trinity, and the communicant professes faith in the announcement made, neither party being so presumptuous as to suppose that their conceptions of God are clear and complete apprehensions of the divine nature, or that all God has revealed concerning himself is so transparently perspicuous to human thought as to leave no mystery in the revelation. Secondly, if there be error in the interpretation of Scripture, so that the doctrine of the trinity is really of human invention, still the Church is blameless, as the error is one of human judgment, and is pardonable

because sincerely indulged. The so-called illiberality is practiced by reason of a pious deference to the authority of God's Word, and is therefore so far forth commendable; at most it is not a proper subject of censure or reproach.

But still the objector insists that, though it be conceded that the doctrine of trinity is not absurd, and that inability to comprehend the fullness of its import is not a bar to faith in the fact, especially when the fact is affirmed on the authority of a divine revelation, still the doctrine is useless—is of no value, except as an interpretation of a few passages of Scripture, and ought not therefore to be insisted upon as an article of the Christian faith. We reply, the doctrine of God is fundamental to philosophy, morals, and religion; as is a man's idea of God, not merely of what God thinks and feels and does, but of what he is as to his nature and manner of subsistence, so is the man's philosophy and religious faith, so is his moral character and religious experience. Ignorance of God in some respects, is not a bar to the attainment of man's highest possibility; but it is fairly presumable, that whatever revelation God has made of himself is not only useful, but is also essential to the attainment of man's highest good. "To know God and Jesus Christ, whom he hath sent, is eternal life." The perfection of eternal life, or principle of man's highest, greatest good, is

therefore proportionate to the correctness and completeness of the knowledge man has of God. If God has revealed himself, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, it must be not useless, but of the highest importance, that our apprehension correspond with the revelation. If a man deny the divinity of the Son of God, and deny the personality and divinity of the Holy Spirit, and ascribe essential deity to the Father only, he worships a deity different from the deity of the worshiper who believes that the three are one, equal in wisdom, power, glory, and eternity. Perhaps in a judgment of charity, because of ignorance, neither are chargeable with the sin of idolatry; but the fact of defective, improper, and therefore useless or injurious, worship exists in the case of one or the other or both. As is the idea of God, so is his worship; either pure, holy, and profitable, or impure, imperfect, defective, and useless, or unholy, blasphemous, and injurious. Worship involves love, the adoring admiration of God, because of what he is; gratitude, an outgoing of the heart's affections because of favors received; penitence, a godly sorrow because of that which is displeasing to God; faith, a trust or confidence in the mercy of God for the remission of sins and the restoration of favor. These states of mind, and whatever else is implied in worship, are all modified by the apprehension of the nature and

character of God the object of worship; the whole of devotion, of piety, the whole of man's relations and obligations are modified and determined by the idea the worshiper entertains of him whom he worships: the idea of God is fundamental to religion; without that idea there is no religion; as is that idea, so is religion.

If a man deny the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and his faith be consistent with itself, he will also deny the doctrine of atonement as received and believed by the great body of the Christian Church. As a logical sequence of these denials, there will follow the denial of original sin, of regeneration by the supernatural agency of the Spirit, of justification by faith only—in a word, of all the doctrines which distinguish an evangelic from a rationalistic faith. This is not mere theory; the facts of history illustrate and confirm the statement. Unitarians, generally, especially those of the Socinian schools, reject the idea that the death of Christ was in any sense a satisfaction to justice for the sins of men. In their theory Christ died as other mortals die. In its circumstances his death was a seal to his ministry, an attestation of his sincere belief in the truth of his teachings, an example of moral heroism, of self-sacrifice in the interests of truth, an antecedent to his resurrection, by which miracle he authenticated his mission as a teacher sent from God. His death, with his

life, was a reconciliation of man to his Maker, and in that sense a propitiation; but in no sense a reconciliation of God to man. With Socinians, the idea of a propitiation in the commonly accepted import of the word, is an especial abhorrence. The doctrine of original sin, or of natural depravity, is universally rejected by Arians and Socinians. The Scriptures which are interpreted as teaching this doctrine are by them regarded as referring to the natural limitations and imperfections of a finite nature. Man is as he was created, able to stand, liable to fall; a being of higher and lower propensities, both natural and lawful. Man is morally neither good nor bad by nature; he is a sinner only by voluntary transgression. Regeneration is not a change in character wrought by supernatural agency, but a change in opinion, in practice, in Church relations, accomplished by man's volitions. Justification and salvation are not conditioned upon faith only. Salvation is conditioned upon educational processes, upon self-culture, upon good works, upon deeds of kindness and charity—in a word, Unitarianism is entirely another Gospel. The interpretations of the New Testament by Unitarians are from first to last—from alpha to omega—entirely different from the interpretations of Trinitarians. The systems of religion as held by the two have scarcely any thing in common, besides the rationalistic theism common

to all religions. To say that the doctrine of the Trinity is useless—that to insist upon it as an article of Christian faith is illiberal—is to say that Christianity is useless, and that it is illiberal to refuse mere rationalists a Christian recognition.

The Trinity is the chief corner-stone of the Christian system. Eliminate that, with what logically follows it, and nothing is left but what is common to all theistic systems of religion known among men. By so much as Christianity has any claims to consideration, by so much as it contains excellencies confessedly superior to any other system of religion extant among men, by so much as it is authenticated by indubitable proofs as a revelation of God's will, by so much as man has reason to receive the Bible as his sole and authoritative rule of faith and practice, by so much is it incumbent upon one who desires to know God and do his will to inquire diligently, honestly, without prejudice, without fear or favor, whether the Bible does or does not teach the Church doctrine of the Holy Trinity. Especially is the question, "What think ye of Christ?" of the first importance. The true answer to the question, "Who is Christ?" contains the soul and substance, the essence and life, the matter and manner, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, the whole and the part, of the Christian religion.

It is not here affirmed that a knowledge and

apprehension of the formulas of the Church are essential to Christian experience. For this, the statements of the Bible are not only sufficient, but are of course preferable. The symbols of the Church are a defense against errors in judgment, errors which, when admitted, lead to an abandonment of the Scripture statements, and then, and thus, to errors in practice and experience. As the Church in its early history sustained a fervent piety and a consistent Christianity by adherence to faith in the Bible forms of doctrine, so in all ages the whole Church and the individual members thereof may live a Christian life and attain unto the highest form of Christian experience by faith in the words of God—by faith in Bible teachings, not only as to the substance of its doctrine, but also as to its forms of expression.

We expect to show, in pages following, that all that is included in the statement, “There are three person in one God, of equal power and eternity,” is explicitly stated in the language of the Bible—that is to say, we expect to show that it is explicitly stated that God is one; that divine titles, attributes, works, and worship, are ascribed equally to Father, to Son, and to the Holy Spirit; that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are distinct persons; that the Father is first, the Son second, and the Spirit third; that in acts of creation, preservation, and government, the three concur; that

creation is predominantly referred to the Father, redemption to the Son, and sanctification to the Spirit; that generation is exclusively predicated of the Father, filiation of the Son, and procession of the Spirit.

CHAPTER IV.

BIBLE PROOFS OF TRINITY.

I. GOD is one. We have discussed the divine unity under the head of attributes. Wherever Christianity has obtained a hearing, polytheism, if existent, has expired. That the Bible distinctly affirms the unity of God no one doubts. It is needful, therefore, in this connection only to refer to passages declaring or implying that "the Lord our God is one Lord; Jehovah is God." Deut. iv, 35, 39; vi, 4; 2 Sam. vii, 22; xxii, 32; 1 Kings viii, 60; 1 Chron. xvii, 20; Ps. xviii, 31; lxxxvi, 31; Isa. xliii, 10, 11, 12; xlv, 6, 8; xlv, 5, 6, 21, 22; xlvi, 9; Joel ii, 27; Zech. xiv, 9; Mark xii, 29, 32; John xvii, 3; 1 Cor. viii, 4, 5, 6; Gal. iii, 20; 1 Tim. ii, 5.

II. The Father is a person, and is God. That he who is referred to in Scripture by the titles Father, our Father, the Father, is the same as Jehovah, the Lord God, the God of Israel, the only living and true God, is not a matter of question. Whether the title primarily refers to God

as a being, or as a person, is not here important. It is sufficient in this connection simply to say the somewhat, whatever it be, spoken of in the Scriptures under the title, the Father, our Father, is God; the object of man's love, obedience, and worship; the Creator of heaven and earth; Upholder and Governor of all things. That God is a person, is evident from all the arguments that antagonize pantheism, from the marks of design every-where manifest in nature, and from the whole tenor of the Scriptures. In all verbal revelations God makes of himself, he uses the personal pronouns. He says I, thou, he. God is a being possessed of intelligence and free-will. By all that is known of God, it is evident that he is a conscious author of intentional acts. This is what is meant by personality. God is a person; the Father is God; therefore, the Father is a person. That there is a personal God, that there is one God and one person, and that the Father is that one God and one person, may be assumed without further discussion.

III. The Son is God. The essential deity of our Lord Jesus Christ is the pivotal topic of discourse in any discussion of the doctrine of Trinity. If it be found that the Scriptures do assert that Jesus Christ is God in the highest sense of that term, then is the controversy with all classes of anti-trinitarians closed, whether they be Monarchians,

Nominal Trinitarians, Sabellians, Arians, or Socinians. This doctrine, then, usually called the doctrine of the divinity of Christ, must be examined carefully, candidly, and somewhat at length. To quote and comment upon all that the Scriptures say of Christ would require a volume well-nigh equal in size to the Bible itself. To the extent required by a fair and full discussion, yet as briefly as is consistent with fairness and adequate fullness, we turn to the Holy Scriptures to inquire of them what is their testimony concerning Christ? who is he? what is he?

a. The Humanity of Christ.—In the early history of the Church, the divine nature of our Lord was the all-absorbing theme of thought and discourse. The Gnostics, who had adopted, as a part of their philosophy the Manichean theory of matter, that it is eternal and essentially evil, and itself the source of all evil, when any of them became Christian could not believe that so great and so good a being as Christ, their Savior and God, was in any important sense or in any intimate relation connected with so great an evil as matter; hence they denied the humanity of our Lord, and affirmed that all that was human in Christ was only in appearance; hence they were called Docetæ and Phantasiastæ. The Monarchians, or Patripassians, asserted that the one person of the Godhead united itself with a human body, but not with

a rational human soul. The Monophysites affirmed one nature only, probably conceiving that what of human nature there was in Christ was transmuted into the divine. The Monothelites admitted two natures—the human and divine—but affirmed but one will.

These, with the Nestorian and other heresies in Christology, caused the assembling of the council at Chalcedon, in 451. The Chalcedon symbol, which has been during the centuries since its publication, and is now, the standard of orthodoxy in Christology, reads thus: “We teach that Jesus Christ is perfect as respects Godhood, and perfect as respects manhood; that he is truly God and truly a man, consisting of a rational soul and a body; that he is consubstantial with the Father as to his divinity, and consubstantial with us as to his humanity, and like us in all respects, sin excepted. He was begotten of the Father before creation as to his deity, but in these last days he was born of Mary, the mother of God as to his humanity. He is one Christ, existing in two natures, without mixture, without change, without division, without separation, the diversity of the two not being at all destroyed by their union in the person, but the peculiar properties of each nature being preserved and concurring to one person and one substance.” The Athanasian Creed affirms of Christ that he is “perfect God and perfect man, of a reasonable

soul and human flesh subsisting; who, although he be God and man, yet he is not two, but one Christ; one, not by conversion of the Godhead into flesh, but by taking manhood into God; one altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by unity of person; for as the reasonable soul and flesh is one man, so God and man is one Christ.”

That the above, so far as the assertion of the true humanity of our Savior is concerned, corresponds with the teachings of the New Testament, none, in our times, will dispute. Suffice it, therefore, to quote without comment, a few of the many passages of Scripture bearing upon this subject: “The Word was made flesh; he made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross; forasmuch as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; he took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham.”

Jesus was born of a woman, grew in wisdom and stature, hungered, thirsted; was weary, ate, drank, slept, journeyed; was grieved and tempted, sought aid and relief in prayer, marveled; was moved with compassion, wept; was troubled in spirit, recognized filial and fraternal relations, indulged friendships, felt aversions; he was a high-

priest touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin; he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears; was crucified, dead, and buried; he lived the life and died the death of a man; he called himself the Son of man, and was called our elder brother; he was a man whose human nature partook of all that essentially belongs to our common humanity.

b. The Pre-existence of Christ.—Christ existed before he was born of a woman. He was, previous to his appearance in the flesh; his earthly life was not the beginning of his being—“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.” This passage plainly identifies Jesus Christ and the Word, and therefore asserts that Jesus Christ was in the beginning. This term, “in the beginning,” probably refers to the eternity past—to duration antecedent to the commencement of creation, and in that sense is indefinite; but if a definite point of time is referred to, that point is evidently anterior to creation; but for our present purpose it is sufficient to say that it designates time anterior to

the birth of Christ, and is so explicit that it is determinative of the question of Christ's pre-existence. The Socinian paraphrase is unworthy of notice except as it exhibits the absolute absurdity of their theory. In the beginning of Christ's ministry he was; his sentiments, sympathies, and purposes were with God—were accordant with the divine will; and he was God to his Church; that is, he was the head of the Christian Church, the founder of the Christian religion. The Word was made flesh—that is, the Logos, or head of the Church, was a man. This interpretation makes the first verse of John's Gospel simply a silly truism, and leaves the fourteenth utterly void of meaning. John viii, 58: "Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, before Abraham was, I am." Here pre-existence is directly affirmed. The form of expression denotes eternity. If mere pre-existence had been intended, Christ would have said, before Abraham was, I was. Pre-existence is included, and, as is evident from the context, is the primary thought. According to Socinian exegesis the Savior said, Before Abraham, I existed in the purpose and plan of God; or, Before Abraham becomes the father of many nations, I exist—an affirmation perfectly innocent, as any man living in those times, or at any time since, might say the same thing; and yet for saying what he did the Jews were not only surprised,

but were also enraged, and took up stones to stone him, as being guilty of blasphemy by laying claim to a divine attribute. John iii, 13: "No man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." With pre-existence Christ here predicates omnipresence of himself. To ascend up into heaven, according to the Socinians, is to become learned in religious truths. To descend from heaven, is to teach religion among men. In this sense what the Savior said was not true, for Moses, David, Solomon, Isaiah, and many others, were well versed in religion, and were teachers of religion among men. Again, if to ascend into heaven means to learn religion, and to descend from heaven is to teach it, what did the Savior mean when he said that, while conversing with Nicodemus, he was in heaven? The expression, "came down from heaven," is of frequent occurrence: "He that cometh from above is above all; he that is of the earth is earthy, and speaketh of the earth; the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven; I am the bread of life; I am the bread which came down from heaven."

Again, Christ is often spoken of as coming into the world in such a manner as clearly implies his pre-existence: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." The passages

can not be rationally interpreted as meaning nothing more than that he was a teacher of religion, without violence to common sense and to all the acknowledged rules of interpretation. The coming down from heaven is a literal and not a figurative coming, as is also the ascending up into heaven.

John vi, 62: "What and if ye shall see the Son of man ascend up where he was before," must be referred to his literal ascension, when the disciples saw him taken up into heaven, out of their sight. This, and all corresponding forms of speech, when used in reference to our Lord, signify a literal change of place. Christ existed before he came in the flesh; his incarnation was a coming down from heaven, and his ascension was an ascending up into heaven, where he was before. John xvii, 5: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." Can any one not searching for a construction that will accommodate a theory, read this passage and construe it as though it read, "glorify thou me with the glory thou, before the world was, didst ordain to bestow upon me?" if not, then the common construction must stand, and the existence of Christ before the world was must be admitted.

c. The Titles of Christ.—The names by which God is known among men are ascribed to Christ. In no case where a name of deity is used as a

name of Christ is there any intimation that it is used in a subordinate sense. In all cases where so used the name is applied with the naturalness and ease common to speakers and writers using the proper and appropriate names of the persons of whom they speak or write. In many cases the context and the evident manner of using the name or title forbid any other construction than that which regards the terms as used in their highest sense.

God.—John i, 1: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” The Socinian exegesis has been noticed above. The Arian exegesis, and that of the semi-Arian or nominal Trinitarian are the same. They construe the passage as though it read, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with *the* God, and the Word was *a* God.” It is urged, first, that the idea of a plurality of persons in the Godhead is, if not entirely yet so nearly antagonistic to the doctrine of the divine unity, that whenever, as in this case, a passage of Scripture appears to teach a plurality, it is competent to give the passage such a construction as will accord with the idea of unity and exclude that of plurality if the passage will admit of it; secondly, it is said this passage will not only admit of the construction given above, but that such a construction is warranted and authorized by the fact that in the original the article is used before

the word God in the second clause of the text and omitted in the third clause, so that the translation, "the Word was with *the* God and the Word was *a* God," is more literal and correct than that of the common version.

In reply, we remark, first, on the authority of critics, than whom none have a more thorough knowledge of the Greek language, that in nearly all cases where the article is used both before the subject and the predicate, the two are convertible; so that whatever may be affirmed of the one may also be affirmed of the other. According to this usage of the Greek, if the last clause of the verse had read, "and the Word was the God," it would have affirmed that whatever may be predicated of God the Father, may be also predicated of the Word or Logos; which, in this case, would be to affirm that the God and the Logos were one and the same (the affirmation of the Patripassians of ancient, and the Swedenborgians of modern, times). But evidently this would make the third clause contradict the second; it says the Logos was *with* God. Now, whatever is intended by the preposition "*with*," whether companionship, or agreement in opinion, or sympathy, or co-operation—whatever be the precise meaning of this particle "*with*," it indicates a relation; a relation implies two; two implies characteristics by which one is distinguished from the other; *a* somewhat must pertain

to *the* God, or God the Father, that does not pertain to the Logos, or Word; and conversely, somewhat must pertain to the Word that does not pertain to God the Father. Let it be here distinctly noted that this distinction was of so much importance in the mind of the Inspirer of this most valuable revelation, that he repeats it, or causes it to be repeated, in the second verse—“The same was in the beginning with God.” Secondly, it is not even claimed that the article is always used before the term *theos* when used in its highest sense; for numerous instances occur in which it is omitted—for example, “With men this is impossible, but with God [not *the* God] all things are possible; ye can not serve God and mammon. No man hath seen God at any time.” Thirdly, that the word God, as applied to Christ in this first verse of John’s Gospel is not used in a subordinate, but in its highest sense, is evident from what follows in the third verse—“All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made.” Here creation is ascribed to the Logos, which accords with and confirms the declarations of verses first and second. The Logos was in the beginning, and was with God. He *was*. He existed before any created person or thing. He was in some sense distinguished from God. The Church creed uses the word person to designate this distinction. He was, and was a

different person from God; and yet he was God; that is, he was different as to personality, and yet in some sense he was the same as God. The Church creed designates this sameness by the term essence, or substance. As to substance, the Word was God—God in the highest sense of the term. This passage, then, presents an instance in which not only a name or title of deity, in its highest sense, is ascribed to Christ, but is also itself an affirmation that Christ is God. No form of expression could be a stronger affirmation unless it should be thought that the use of the present tense of the verb would be. If the passage read “the Word was with God and the Word *is* God,” it would accord more fully with the usage of all languages in speaking of that which is immutable and eternal. But there is an adequate reason in the circumstances and purposes of the writing for the use of the past instead of the present tense. John wrote his Gospel, as he himself says, for the general purposes of religion in all the ages, “that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through his name;” but he wrote when the Gnostic philosophy was mingling, and had already mingled largely with the Christian faith. According to Gnosticism, God was an abyss—an unrevealed and unrevealable, unconscious, inactive, though self-evolving, inconceivable

something. By the self-evolution of the abyss, æons came to be—called æons, eternal beings, because, in the abyss, they had an eternal existence. Demiurge, a fallen æon, was the creator of this world and of man. The Logos, or Christ, was the first, the purest, and highest of the æons, who came to deliver man from the power and dominion of Demiurge. The only begotten Son of God was not the Logos, but another æon. Now, these and other equally crude and false ideas of the Gnostic philosophy was in the mind of the apostle, and gave direction, to some extent, to his train of thought and form of expression. In the text under consideration he evidently, in opposition to the assumptions of Gnosticism, intends to affirm the eternity, personality, and deity of Logos, the Christ. His stand-point of thought is as far back in the inconceivable duration of past eternity as human thought can go. “In the beginning”—at any assignable point in past eternity—*Logos was*; not was created, not was brought into existence, not was potentially existent in the self-evolving power of the abyss, the absolute, the infinite; but *was*—that is, the Logos, as Logos, was absolutely eternal. He was with God—“the same was in the beginning with God;” was a distinct subsistence; in himself a person; and he was God. He, not Demiurge, was the creator of all things—without him was not any thing made that was

made." All things, even matter (not an eternal, essentially evil thing), became, or came into existence, by him. He was the efficient cause of all that is opposed to nothingness. Not in another æon, but "in him was life." In him was life inhering in his nature, not communicated from another, as the light of man is derived from the life of Logos. The whole train of thought derives its form from the stand-point of the thinker, and is naturally in the past tense, but evidently from the import is equivalent to an unqualified assertion that *Logos is God*.

It is vain to say that the term God is itself a relative term signifying dominion, and may, therefore, not signify essential deity; for it must be manifest, on only a cursory reading of the Scriptures, that it is a title used even more frequently than any other, when, beyond question, the infinite substance is intended; and that of this infinite substance are predicated, under the title God, all divine attributes, including spirituality, personality, unity, unlimited wisdom, power, and goodness, with holiness, truth, mercy, compassion, and longsuffering. To this same being, under the title God, all divine works are ascribed, and for him are claimed all those affections, services, and devotions which belong only to the Eternal Spirit. To show, therefore, that the inspired writers call Jesus Christ God, in the sense usually attached to that title,

is to show, on Bible authority, that Jesus Christ is God.

Rom. ix. 5: "Whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed forever." In the natural construction of this passage as it reads, both in the English version and in the original Greek, Christ is called "God blessed forever." That the term God is here used in its highest sense, no one questions. That the term is found in every known manuscript of this Epistle, in every ancient version extant, and in every quotation of the Fathers, is also conceded. The passage as it stands is not only an unqualified affirmation of the essential deity of our Lord, but is also as direct and positive as language can make it. There is no resort but to criticism. Arian and Socinian commentators make the last clause a doxology,—Blessed be God forever! Against this construction there are these insuperable objections: First, the original is not in the form of a doxology—it reads, "God blessed forever;" but if a doxology, according to the universal usage of New Testament writers, it should read, "Blessed be God forever." Second, if the term God does not refer to Christ, then only his humanity is spoken of in the text, and the clause, "according to the flesh," becomes useless, since his humanity could come in no other way. Third, the clause, "according to the flesh," is an

evident limitation, and stands in antithesis to something else. It was the distinguishing honor and high privilege of the Jewish people to be the progenitor of the world's Savior—the Christ, “according to the flesh;” that as to his humanity was of the seed of Abraham. But Christ was more than a mere man. He had a nature which did not come “according to the flesh”—was not of Jewish descent, and, as to that nature, he is declared to be “God blessed forever.” The antithesis of the text, the arrangement of the words in it, and the omission of the article before the word God (which would certainly have been used if that term had been the subject of the clause), all make the common version the true rendering, and the text stands an impregnable demonstration of the divinity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Titus ii, 13, “Looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ.” The only question here is whether the term “Great God,” and the term “Savior Jesus Christ,” refer to one and the same individual, or to two. The use of the article before the first of these terms, and its omission before the second, according to Greek usage, makes the two terms apply to the same person. Again, the term “appearing” is never applied by New Testament writers to the Father, but always to the Son.

Matthew i, 23: "Now, all this was done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us." A futile attempt has been made to question the genuineness of this passage,—futile, because it is found in all extant manuscripts and versions. It is said that the term Emmanuel does not prove divinity any more than the names Eli and Elihu. The answer is obvious; Eli and Elihu were personal names, known and recognized as such by all who used them, like the modern names, Lord, King, Bishop, and others; but the word Emmanuel was never so used, but is a descriptive title, and is, therefore, an affirmation of the Savior's divinity.

Luke i, 16, 17: "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God, and he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias." This refers to John the Baptist as the forerunner of Christ, and is an instance in which Christ is called the Lord God of the children of Israel.

Heb. i, 8: "But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." To avoid the testimony of this text it is alleged that it is a quotation from the Psalms, and may be applied to Solomon. A reference to the Psalm, the forty-

fifth, will show that it contains much that will not apply to Solomon, such as that he was a great warrior, the father of a numerous royal progeny, a lover of righteousness and the founder of an eternal kingdom. But if in any sense it may be applied to Solomon, it must be in a sense incomparably below that in which it is applied to Christ in Hebrews; for here, to say the least, it is used to exalt Christ above the angels. The sense, then, is peculiar, and belongs only to Christ, and the context shows clearly that the text has reference to a divine person, for he is called "the only begotten Son of God, the brightness of his glory and the express image of his person, upholding all things by the word of his power; he holds a scepter of righteousness; he laid the foundations of the earth, the heavens are the work of his hands; he shall remain when the earth and the heavens perish, and of his years there shall be no end." The passage has been so construed as to read, "God is thy throne forever and ever," but evidently such a construction is unworthy of criticism.

1 John v, 20: "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us understanding that we may know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his son Jesus Christ. This is the true God and eternal life." Matthew xx, 28: "Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God." 1 Tim. iii, 16: "And

without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory." Titus i, 3: "But hath in due times manifested his word through preaching, which is committed unto me, according to the commandment of God our Savior." Acts xx, 28: "Take heed, therefore, unto yourselves and to all the flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God which he hath purchased with his own blood." Isaiah ix, 6: "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." Such are some of the passages in which the term "*God*" in its highest sense, and indicative of essential deity, is used as the personal name or descriptive title of our Lord Jesus Christ. Obviously the most natural interpretation of these passages is that given them in the orthodox theology. The exegetical resorts of antitrinitarians fail in every case. These quotations can not be subverted, they stand as positive and ought to be regarded as decisive proof that the holy men who wrote the sacred Scriptures as they were moved by the Holy Ghost believed and intended to make known their

belief that the divine Logos who became flesh in the person of our Lord Jesus was one with the Father, true and eternal God.

Son of God. There are in the New Testament over fifty passages in which Christ is called the Son of God, and over forty in which he speaks of God as his Father; calling him not *our* Father, but *my* Father. During the apostolic age, and long after, to believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God was regarded as the condition of membership in the Church, and the distinguishing characteristic of a Christian. Acts viii, 36, 37: "And the eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." The question whether God has a Son, was not a question in the minds of the sacred writers. In more than one hundred passages, God is spoken of as the Father of Christ, or Christ is spoken of as the Son of God, in just the same way as would have been if the actual existence of a divine son had been taken for granted without even the suggestion of a question on the subject. What, then, is the precise import of this term Son of God? Why was Christ called the Son of God? What is that relation between God and Christ which is indicated by this term?

1. This relation of sonship is not founded in

any event of Christ's human history, or any characteristic of his human nature, but is founded in his divine nature, and is a relation subsisting in the distinction of personality which the Scriptures teach belongs to the essential nature of the divine essence. The eternal Logos is in some sense God's Son.

All intelligent beings may address God as "our Father," and they are children and brethren because of their relation to a common Creator. But Christ is God's only Son—a son in a sense in which he has no brother. Christians are children of God by adoption, but Christ was never an alien; he is child and heir by natural right.

It is asserted by some that Christ is called the Son of God because of the miraculous conception and the announcement of the angel to Mary. Luke i, 35 looks like that—"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God." But this theory is antagonized, first, by the fact that he was called the Son of God by many persons who could know nothing of his miraculous conception; as, for example, Nathaniel, who evidently supposed him the natural son of Joseph, but nevertheless, on receiving evidence of Christ's omniscience, addressed him, saying, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God;

thou art the King of Israel." Second, by the fact that Christ, when defending his claims to a divine Sonship, never referred to his miraculous conception, but always to his works; and, thirdly, by the fact that results are ascribed to faith in the divine Sonship of Christ, which could not follow if sonship had no higher import than the miraculous conception. 1 John v, 5: "Who is he that overcometh the world but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God?"

Another theory is, that Christ's resurrection was the basis of his Sonship; and this theory is supported by reference to St. Paul's apparent interpretation of the second Psalm. Acts xiii, 32, 33: "The promise which was made unto the fathers God hath fulfilled the same unto us their children, in that he hath raised up Jesus again; as it is also written in the second Psalm, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee." This passage, however, may be rationally interpreted by Rom. i, 3, 4: "Concerning his Son Jesus Christ our Lord, which was made of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead," in which it is plain that the writer regards the resurrection as the event which *declares*, demonstrates that our Lord Jesus Christ, who, as to his humanity, or "according to the flesh," was

made of the seed of David, was, as to his divinity, "according to the spirit of holiness," the Son of God; that is to say, the resurrection is not the reason why Christ is the Son of God, but the event which declares him such. Moreover, the same objections may be urged against this theory as were urged against the theory of the conception; and again, the term "this day," in the second Psalm, is wholly unintelligible on either the theory of the conception or resurrection.

Another theory, adopted by a large class of interpreters, teaches that Christ is the Son of God because of the Messiahship. In support of this interpretation, it is alleged that the term "Son of God" is, in very many passages of Scripture, put in juxtaposition with terms indicating the Messiahship, in the same way as synonyms are frequently put side by side for purposes of emphasis or illustration. For example, when our Savior inquired of his disciples, "Whom do men say that I am?" and "Whom say ye that I am?" Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of God." It must be conceded, first, that for all that is apparent in this passage, the terms may be synonymous; and, second, that there are very many similar passages scattered through all the New Testament writings; and, third, that the interpretation ought, therefore, to be adopted if it can be shown to be applicable in every instance where the term in question is

used. But from John x, 36, "Say ye, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?" it is evident that claiming to be God's son was, in the estimation of the Jews of Christ's time, blasphemy; a crime punishable with death by the Jewish law. To claim to be the Messiah was no such sin. The whole people of Israel were anxiously waiting the appearance of their promised deliverer; all were ready to hail the first one showing any evidence that he was "he that should come." Many believed on Jesus as the Messiah; who, when he claimed divine Sonship, took up stones to stone him, saying, "He is guilty of death, for being a man he maketh himself God, for he says I am the Son of God." It is evident, therefore, from this text—John x, 36—that the terms "Messiah" and "Son of God" are not always, if ever, synonymous. A more careful and extended consideration of this passage just now alluded to, with its connections, will, as we think, not only effectually disprove the theories above discussed, but present a conclusive, even a determinative, argument for the position herein maintained—namely, that the term "Son of God" is a personal appellation of the pre-existent Logos—is a divine and not a human title. From this Scripture—John x, from the 24th to the 39th verse, inclusive—it is evident that "the Jews who came round about him as he walked in the Temple, in Solomon's porch

on the feast of the dedication," entertained in their thoughts not even the most distant idea of the miraculous conception or of the resurrection; and they were evidently in the same state of mind in reference to the Messiahship as were the multitude on the day of entrance into Jerusalem, who cried, "Hosanna! Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." When they inquired, as recorded in the 24th verse, "How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly," they were not only willing, but were anxiously desirous that Jesus should give them indubitable evidence that he was their expected Christ. To claim to be the Messiah was not, then, an occasion of offense, much less a ground for an accusation of crime. The reply of Jesus to their question is, in substance, My works show that I am the promised Christ; but I am not the Christ you expect, I am more. By your national prejudices, you are disqualified to judge of my character, or rightly to interpret the evidences of my mission. "Ye are not of my sheep"—not in mind rightly disposed toward the truth; your spiritual receptivity is depraved by your prejudices. Nevertheless I am the true Messiah—greater than you look for; not merely a man and a monarch, but a God-man—God manifest in the flesh; "I and my Father are one." On this announcement they took up stones to stone him, and he asking why

they stoned him, they replied, "For blasphemy, and because that thou, being a man, *makest thyself God.*" Let it here be distinctly marked that they accused him of blasphemy, and attempted to execute the penalty prescribed by the Jewish law for that sin; not because he claimed a miraculous conception; not because he foretold his resurrection; not because he claimed to be the Christ; but because he claimed equality and identity with God.

Should it be said that this argument is weakened by the Savior's reply in the thirty-fourth and thirty-fifth verses, "Is it not written in your law, ye are gods? If he called them gods to whom the Word of God came." We reply, that to say that herein the Savior denies that he had claimed divinity in what he had before said, is to make his conduct in this case trifling and ridiculous, not in any ordinary sense, but supremely and contemptibly so. The obvious intent of these words is to reply to that part of the accusation against him contained in the words, "*being a man;*" as if he had said "being a man" is not of itself alone conclusive argument; not decisive in a charge of blasphemy preferred against one for assuming a divine title; for in Scripture the term God is applied to civil rulers and religious teachers; they are called gods "to whom the Word of God came." That I am a man is not of itself a determinative argument

that I am not also divine. The title may be applied to a man, and the divinity signified by it be also predicated at the same time of the same man. That this is the proper exegesis of our Savior's reply is further evident from what follows in the thirty-seventh and thirty-eighth verses, wherein he again directly reasserts his claim to a divine character by saying that by reason of his works it was in their power to know, and was obligatory on them to believe, that "*the Father was in him, and he in the Father.*" That Jesus was understood to claim equality with the Father, and that he intended to be so understood is evident from the fact that when he said "the Father is in me and I in him," they, the Jews, "therefore sought again to take him, but he escaped out of their hands." Let it be distinctly noted here that in the thirty-sixth verse, our Savior states, as the sole ground on which the charge of blasphemy had been preferred against him, that he had said I am the Son of God. Remembering that blasphemy was the crime of which the Jews accused Jesus; that the blasphemy consisted in this, that he being a man made himself God, and that he did so by saying I am the Son of God, let us turn to the account of his final trial and condemnation before the chief priests and elders of the people. Matt. xxvi, 63-66. "And the high-priest answered and said unto him, I adjure thee by the

living God that thou tell us whether thou be the Christ, the Son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said: nevertheless I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high-priest rent his clothes, saying, He hath spoken blasphemy; what further need have we of witnesses? behold, now ye have heard his blasphemy. What think ye? They answered and said, He is guilty of death." The record as given by Mark xiv, and also that by Luke xxii, is nearly in the same words as this quoted from Matthew. All agree in these particulars: The high-priest asked, "Art thou the Son of God? He answered, I am: and the whole council adjudged him therefore guilty of blasphemy and worthy of death. The same thing is yet more distinctly stated in John xix, 7, where the Jews accuse Christ before Pilate, saying, "We have a law, and by our law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God." Now, from all this we think the conclusion resistless that, the New Testament being authority in the case, Jesus Christ was guilty of the crime of which he was accused, was justly condemned, and legally executed, or *he is the Son of God in a sense that makes him equal with God*. That is to say, his Sonship pertains not to his human nature but to his divine nature; filiation in some sense pertains to Deity.

The distinction of persons in the Godhead is founded on something. "The word was with God." A relation subsists of some kind, indicated by the term "*with*;" but relation requires plurality, and plurality necessitates characteristics by which one is distinguished from another. Now, it would seem that the above discussion sufficiently evinces that the characteristic by which the First Person in the Godhead is in Scripture distinguished from the others is, that it pertains to him to be a Father; and in the same way it would seem that the Second Person was chiefly if not solely distinguished by the fact that it pertains to him to be a Son.

2. Jesus Christ is not called the Son of God because he is the first created being, nor because he is the greatest being in the universe next to God; or, in other words, the Scripture testimony concerning Christ's Sonship is not satisfactorily interpreted by either the Arian or semi-Arian theories.

Arianism seems to be an effort of the reason to sustain the unity and supremacy of God, and to avoid the difficulties of the Trinity, and doubtless in many minds it accomplishes its object, but to others it is a failure. Though the doctrine of the Sonship be stated in the terms of the strictest of the orthodox; though it be affirmed that fecundity is as essential to Deity as omnipotence; that God

has a Son by the necessity of his nature; that the Father is a Father by an eternal begetting, and the Son is a Son by an eternal generation, even though the doctrine be stated in the strongest terms used, yet the statement does not, to some minds, present a mystery more inscrutable or difficulties more numerous and insurmountable than does the affirmation of a *Created Creator*, or a subordinate Deity. In the light of thought, a first created being, who by delegated power becomes the Creator of all existences, both of matter and of mind, the creator and upholder of all that exists except God, the only manifestation of Deity and the object of all worship, is as unthinkable, as evidently impossible in itself, as any theory of a divine Sonship ever propounded. The whole question of Christology, indeed the entire doctrine of the Trinity, is confessedly beyond and above the range of rational thought. Every proper investigation of these topics is by necessity purely exegetical. The only appropriate question is, *What say the Scriptures?* What testimony has God given respecting himself in his Word?

If Arianism be found anywhere in the Bible, it is in the fifteenth verse of the first chapter of Colossians, where Christ is called the "first-born of every creature." Let us examine this Scripture. To interpret the term "first-born" literally

would, so far forth, militate against the theory the passage is quoted to support; for that would make Christ the first *born* being, not the first made, or created. Nothing is gained for any theory by insisting upon a literal interpretation. What, then, is the sense of the term "first-born?" There are only three passages in which this term is applied to Christ. The first is in Rom. viii, 29—"Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren;" the second is the passage under discussion, Col. i, 15—"Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature;" and the third is found in the same chapter, at the 18th verse—"And he is the head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in all things he might have the pre-eminence." Now, the mere reading of these passages makes it sufficiently evident that in the first and third of them, pre-eminence is the idea, and the only idea, expressed by the term first-born; and nothing is left but the manifest inference that pre-eminence is the sense of the term in the text in question. Of course the idea of *first created*, as an expression of order in time, is at once eliminated and eliminated once for all. There is no such idea applied to Christ, no such fact affirmed of him anywhere in the Word of God. But the

strength of the Arian argument lies in the expression "*of every creature.*" This is what grammarians call a partitive genitive—a form of expression in which the person or thing spoken of is reckoned as a part of, or one of, the persons or things to which it stands related; that is to say, the term "first-born of every creature," when applied to Christ, does, by the law of language in all such forms of speech, enumerate Christ among created beings. It will be seen that this argument hinges wholly on the form of the expression, which is evidently accidental and not essential. The term "every creature" is descriptive of that with which he, Christ, is compared, and only by accident or implication is it descriptive of him. Conceding to this grammatical argument all the strength to which it is entitled, we affirm that it must be deemed quite too feeble to be decisive of so grave a question as the one under consideration—Is Christ himself a created being? Certainly, if any other Scripture directly or by fair inference, teaches that Christ is uncreate, this solitary passage, putting forth at best only an implied affirmation, can not avail so much as to terminate the discussion; but, fortunately for the cause of truth, this very passage itself, taken in its immediate connection, overwhelmingly annihilates all that can be inferred from its form of expression.

Let us read this passage with its context:

“Giving thanks unto the Father . . . who hath . . . translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, . . . who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him and for him, and he is before all things, and by him all things consist.” We assume that by all commentators (Socinians excepted, whose exegesis we deem unworthy of notice in this connection), the category is considered exhaustive. “All things in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible,” describes all that has been, is, or will be, in the universe—all things, God and Christ alone excepted. We assume, too, that it is admitted that God created all these things, and now upholds, preserves them by Christ, *en auto*. In him, by him, through him, and for him, they are and were created. God created the world by Christ in the same way as he redeems the world by Christ; and the point at issue between the Arian and orthodox interpretations is this: Is the power in Christ by which he created and now upholds the universe *in him* by delegation or inherently? We affirm the latter, and insist upon it that power to create and preserve the world is such as can not be conferred upon a created or finite being. We have no higher idea

of power than that in question. The Creator of the world is omnipotent, and omnipotence is not transferable. This passage then, "first-born of every creature," must not be interpreted as affirming that Christ is a created being, but as asserting his pre-eminent superiority to all created persons and things.

But may not Christ be called the Son of God because he is the greatest being next to God, subordinate to none but God, supreme and peerless in his supremacy? May not the Scripture testimony concerning Christ be satisfactorily interpreted by predicating divinity of him, but denying essential deity? May not the essence or substance of the pre-existent Logos be *homoiousios*, like or similar to the essence or substance of God, but not *homoousios*, of the same essence as God?

The distinction between divinity and deity—between a God and the God—is another resort of human reason to avoid the difficulties of the Trinity; but, like every other effort of its kind, it is an utter failure. Human reason can not bring down the infinite within its grasp. The infinite and the finite are immeasurably distant from each other, and can not touch each other except by the condescension of the infinite. Do the Scriptures make this distinction? If not in John xiv, 28, then nowhere. Let us examine this saying of our Lord, "My Father is greater than I."

Consider how much is conceded when this passage is quoted in support of semi-Arianism. Conceive any man, angel, or archangel, any created being, saying soberly to his associates, "God is greater than I." What circumstances can conceivably make it necessary or appropriate for any being not God's equal to say, "God is greater than I am?" The fact that Jesus uttered these words is proof that in some sense he and the Father are equal; the words themselves prove that in some sense the Father is greater than he. If they are not equal in essence, it is not conceivable that they are equal in any sense. If it be inquired in what sense the Father is greater, perhaps no mortal can tell. The context says he is greater in a sense that makes it desirable for Christ to return to him. Christ said to his disciples, "If ye loved me ye would rejoice because I said I go unto the Father, for my Father is greater than I." The Father had sent him into the world to save the world. The sender in respect to the sending is greater than the sent, though in all other respects the two are equal. The begetter, in respect to the begetting, is greater than the begotten, though otherwise they are equal. The Father may be the source and foundation of personalities, though the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit be one in essence. Plainly some distinction of inequality is conceivable that does not necessitate any idea of a

distinct order of being. Christ, who said "My Father is greater than I," also said, "I and my Father are one;" "I am in the Father, and the Father in me;" "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father also; how sayest thou then, Show us the Father?" As stated above, an argument has been framed for semi-Arianism founded on the omission of the article in the first verse of John's Gospel. We know not but in our times all antitrinitarians (Socinians, Arians, and semi-Arians), have relinquished all claim to that Scripture, and are disposed rather to say they know not what that passage means than to attempt its explanation, much less derive an argument from it in favor of their theories. Probably most antitrinitarians of our times reject John's Gospel from the canon, deny its inspiration, and refuse to submit to its authority. The argument, with its answer, is given above, under the title, God, and need not be repeated here.

If these considerations, adduced to show that the title "Son of God" is a divine title, are conclusive, as we think they are most decidedly, then is it clearly established that the Scriptures teach the essential deity of our Lord Jesus Christ; so far as our present purpose is concerned, we have, therefore, no further need to consider this title. But still the question remains, and is, and will be asked, Why is this title used? Why is God called

a father? and why is the divine Logos called a son? what characteristic of the divine nature gives rise to these terms? The answer in common language is this: while the Scriptures assert that God is essentially one, they also assert that in some sense he is three, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; a distinction called a distinction of persons exists, and the relation subsisting between the first and second persons is indicated by the terms "Father" and "Son," and probably the *quo modo* of that distinction is of the nature of a generation, so that it may be said Christ is called the Son of God, because he is his son in the literal and proper sense of the term.

The errors in Christology extant in the times of the Nicene Fathers rendered it necessary for the Church to state as definitely as possible its convictions as to the import of the terms "Father," "Son," "Only begotten," "First Begotten;" and their deliberations resulted in the announcement of the doctrine of *Eternal Generation*. What they intended by "eternal generation" is indicated, perhaps as clearly as in any brief statement, in what they said to distinguish it from creation: "The Nicene theologians," says Shedd, in his "History of Doctrines," "distinguish eternal generation from creation by the following particulars: 1. Eternal generation is an offspring out of the eternal essence of God; creation is an origination

of a new essence from nothing. 2. Eternal generation is the communication of an eternal essence; creation is the origination of a temporal essence. 3. That which is eternally generated is of one essence with the generator; but that which is created is of another essence from that of the creator. 4. Eternal generation is necessary, but creation is optional. It is as necessary that there should be a Father and Son in the Godhead as that the Godhead should be eternal or self-existent; but there is no such necessity for creation. 5. Eternal generation is an immanent perpetual activity in an ever-existing essence; creation is an instantaneous act, and supposes no elements of the creature in existence.” “Eternal generation pertains exclusively to the hypostatical character; it is not the essence of deity that is generated, but a *distinction* in that essence.”

It may not be out of place here to say that the creeds of the Church are entitled to respect; the labors of the Fathers are not to be summarily spurned. Sneers at creeds and dogmas are quite too frequent. That the theologians of half a thousand years should employ the strength and energy of their lives in determining whether or not a single letter, and that the smallest in the Greek alphabet, should be rejected from a single word in the creed of the Church is deemed worthy of the world's contempt. But if Origenism had

succeeded—if the *iota* had been admitted—if the Nicene council had written *homoiousios* and not *homoousios*, if the Eternal Logos had been declared *a* God, and not *the* God, then the civilization of the world that would have been during these centuries had been as different from that which has been as theism is different from Christianity. The Nicene formulas have stood an efficient and effectual bulwark and defense against heresy during the ages; they stated the unity of the divine essence and trinity of the divine person with such completeness and distinctness that the faith of the Church, with inconsiderable exceptions, has remained undivided and unshaken for more than a thousand years.

But it will be said that the utility of creeds is due to the truth they contain, and is in spite of their errors; that, as to the Athanasian creed, its doctrine of eternal generation may belong to the same category as its anathemas. This is surely possible, but though it were true it is not to be hastily assumed and the creed summarily rejected. Let what deserves profound respect be profoundly and respectfully considered. What has stood the test of centuries, and been of acknowledged service in the interests of truth and religion, ought not to be rejected unless a competent reason for the rejection be rendered. It is urged as an adequate antecedent objection that the term “eternal

generation” is unintelligible; those who use it know not what they themselves intend by it. The symbols of the Church were never formulated to improve the language of the Scriptures, or to add to revelation thoughts not therein contained: much less has theological thought assumed scientific forms with the vain ambition to teach the philosophy of the divine existence, or the *quo modo* of hypostatical distinctions. The scientific formulas of the Church have originated mostly in efforts for defense against heresy; they therefore made known the truth more by informing us of what it is not than by direct statement of what it is. This is eminently true of the topic before us. Is it asked what is meant by the generation of a personal distinction in the deity or divine essence? manifestly no direct and positive answer, such as the questioner requires, can be given. But he is not a good theologian that asks the question; for the same question with equal force can be proposed with reference to every doctrine that distinguishes Christianity from a mere rationalistic theism. The terms “trinity,” “three persons in one God,” present to thought that which has no analogy in the whole compass of human knowledge, and manifestly whatever be the immanent and ineffable activities by which personal distinctions have existence in the Godhead, herein more than anywhere else lies the heart of the Trinitarian

mystery. This objection, that the term suggests that which is unthinkable, if admitted, is a bar to all discussion on the subject; it is equivalent to an affirmation that it is impossible for man to formulate any idea of a personal distinction in the Godhead; that is, the whole idea of a trinity, whether true or false, is unrevealable.

Many theologians, though they find no Scriptural or logical objections to the doctrine of eternal generation, nevertheless consider it a burden to dogmatic theology, and therefore desire if possible to eliminate it from the creed. It has been suggested that the terms "*first begotten*," and "*only begotten*," which occur but a few times and that in the writings of John, may be rendered "*well beloved*;" and that possibly these terms, together with the terms "*Father*" and "*Son*," are used in the Scriptures only to set forth that there is an infinite affection perpetually subsisting and reciprocal between the three persons of the Trinity. It is hardly possible that this can be, for the term *loved* is a very unnatural rendering of the word *begotten* in the Second Psalm. Moreover it is not manifest that any thing is gained by this interpretation, since it is, to say the least, as difficult to see how affection can be the ground of distinction as it is to apprehend the theory rejected. It is also sometimes said that the terms under discussion are used simply to indicate the

fact of a Trinity; that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are spoken of as each possessing personal characteristics, together with divine attributes, to reveal the *fact* that God immutably one as to essence, subsists in a manner that admits of the personal distinctions, I, thou, he, without attempting to intimate what may be the ground of distinction or the manner of subsistence. That is to say, there is no revelation on the topic we discuss; man does not know, and can not know why Jesus Christ is called the Son of God. To be dogmatically positive on so abstruse a subject is unseemly, and yet we assume that the Trinity was revealed for a purpose, and that it is legitimate to inquire what that revelation is, and so far forth as is possible, to exhaust its contents, that the purpose of its giving may be more surely secured.

The free and abundant use of the terms "Father" and "Son," their use without qualification or explanation, without embarrassment or any implied doubt or difficulty, and the occasional use of the terms "*begotten*," "*first-begotten*," and "*only begotten*;" the use of these terms and none others whenever the relation between God and Christ is referred to, certainly suggest that they are used in a natural and not in a metaphorical sense, and seem to impose the obligation to accept in faith the idea generically, modifying it only by such limitations and restrictions as the nature of the case

requires. Of course generation, as applied to the spiritual and the infinite, must, of necessity, be differentiated in very many particulars from generation applied to the material and the finite. That it may be so differentiated, and yet be generically applied to both, is, to say the least, quite conceivable; and we submit that in the absence of any expressed or plainly implied Scriptural authority for regarding these terms metaphorically, *we are bound to receive them in their literal signification.*

A firm belief in the essential deity of our Lord Jesus Christ may be all that is requisite to the completeness of Christian faith; but certainly a firm conviction that Jesus Christ is God's Son in a literal sense forms a broader, firmer foundation for Christian faith than any other conviction known to thought. If we believe this, then the exceeding sinfulness and infinite peril of sin, the adequacy of atonement to all the necessities of the race, and all other doctrines needful and useful for salvation, are readily and easily believed.

3. *Lord.*—Jeremiah xxiii, 5, 6: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In his days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is his name whereby he shall be called, *The Lord our Righteousness.*" Matt. xxii, 41-45: "While

the Pharisees were gathered together Jesus asked them, What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, The son of David. He saith unto them, How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son?" Luke v, 8: "When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord." vi, 46: "And why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" John xiii, 13: "Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well, for so I am." Acts ii, 36: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ." Acts x, 36: "The word which God sent unto the children of Israel preaching peace by Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)." 1 Cor. ii, 8: "Which none of the princes of this world knew; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." 1 Cor. viii, 6: "But to us there is but one God the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." Gal. i, 3: "Grace be to you, and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ." vi, 18: "Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit,

Amen." Phil. ii, 11: "And every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Heb. i, 10: "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands." 2 John 3: "Grace be with you, mercy and peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in truth and love."

The title Lord is sometimes used as a title of civility and applied to human masters; on the other hand, it is used both in the Septuagint and in the New Testament as the translation of God's incommunicable name, Jehovah. The argument for the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, drawn from the frequent application of this title to him, turns upon the question whether it was used in a higher or in a lower sense. If we admit that the sacred writers believed in our Savior's divinity, then their use of this title is natural, and the passages where it occurs may, without difficulty, be interpreted; that is to say, the doctrine explains the usage; but if Christ be not a divine person, the use of this term "*Lord*," taken in its connections, is certainly misleading. The doxologies place Christ with a divine title, in juxtaposition with God the Father. God is represented as addressing Christ under the title "*Lord*," as the creator of heaven and earth. The question of Christ to the Pharisees as to whose

son Christ was, if regarded in the light of the orthodox faith, has an easy interpretation and an obvious answer. If we reply, As to his humanity Christ was David's son, as to his divinity he was David's Lord, all is intelligible; otherwise, Christ is confounding the Pharisees and us with an inexplicable enigma. The chief considerations which make the New Testament application of the term Lord to Jesus Christ an argument for his divinity, are, first, that "*Jehovah*" is a title of the Messiah in the Old Testament, and in the New, this same title, translated by the term Lord, is applied to Christ as the Messiah; second, the Jehovah of the Old Testament and the Christ of the New are, in several places, identified as the same person. We pass, then, to an examination of this august and incommunicable name of deity—"Jah," "Jehovah," "Lord God of Hosts," "I am"—and inquire, Is this title applied to Christ?

4. *Jehovah*.—Exodus vi, 3: "And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob by the name of God Almighty, but by my name Jehovah was I not known to them." Psalm lxxxiii, 18: "That men may know that thou, whose name alone is Jehovah, art the Most High over all the earth." Isa. xii, 2: "Behold God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he is also become my salvation." Isa. xlii, 8: I am the Lord [*Jehovah*];

that is my name, and my glory will I not give to another." Isa. xlv. 22: "Look unto me and be saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God [Jehovah], and there is none else."

The Hebrew word Jehovah is, in our English version, rendered Jehovah only in three passages—those above quoted. In most cases it is rendered by the term "Lord," as in one case above, and it is sometimes rendered "God," as in the last quoted text. When the term Lord is the rendering of the word Jehovah, it is printed in small capitals.

Mal. iii, 1: "Behold I will send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant whom ye delight in; behold he shall come saith the LORD of hosts." Concerning this passage, several particulars may be noted. The name, "LORD of hosts," in the last clause, is in the original, "Jehovah Sabaoth"—the highest title given to the one eternal God, and possibly may here designate him whom we call God the Father. The term "Lord" in the second clause is "Adonai," usually translated Lord, sometimes God. He is the "messenger of the covenant," "the Lord whom ye" (the Jewish people) "seek, whom ye delight in," whose is the temple; plainly, either Israel's God—the Jehovah of hosts, or the Messiah. There is an

apparent distinction, first, in the use of the different titles—Adonai and Jehovah; but more particularly in the fact that Jehovah speaks of Adonai, the messenger of the covenant, in the third person—“he shall come; he shall suddenly come to his temple.” There is also an apparent identification. Jehovah says, “I will send *my* messenger, and he shall prepare the way before *me*.” The person speaking and the person spoken of are the same or different. If the same, the text is a promise that God himself, having sent a messenger before him, would come to his temple; if different, then the text is a promise that the Messiah should come. The Messiah here set forth as a different person from Jehovah, and yet identified with him, and so far forth as identified, bearing the title, Jehovah of hosts, the proprietor of God’s temple, and the object of worship to God’s people. Now, let us collate this passage with Mark i, 1–4: “The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God: As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee; the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.” Let the following particulars be noted: The first verse is original; the second, a quotation from Malachi—that given above; and the third, from Isa. xl, 3. In Isaiah the reading is, “Prepare ye the way of

the LORD [Jehovah], make straight in the desert a highway for our God [Elohim]." The name Elohim, though not as exclusively as Jehovah the name of the one only and true God, is a name frequently used as its synonym. It is the term used in the first verse of the Bible—"In the beginning God [Elohim] created the heaven and the earth." The voice is that of John the Baptist; he is the messenger whom Jehovah promised to send before him. Jesus Christ is the Lord (Adonai), the messenger of the covenant, proprietor of the temple, sought after and delighted in by Israel, who was to come suddenly; who in Isaiah is called Jehovah and Elohim, and who is also so called in Malachi—unless the apparent distinction there be a real one, and the person speaking be Jehovah the Father, and the person spoken of be Jehovah the Son—Jehovah Jesus. In any exegesis possible, as we see it, the collation of these passages makes it evident that the sacred writers apply the name Jehovah to their Messiah, and thus to Christ; at the same time regarding that sacred name as the incommunicable name of the eternal God, and also making a distinction between the person of God and the person of the Messiah. Jesus Christ is spoken of in the Old Testament under the title Jehovah used in its highest sense; therefore the Godhead indicated by this title is ascribed to him.

Let these passages with their parallels be re-

viewed and carefully noted. In Mal. iii, 1, the speaker and spoken of are identified by the interchange of persons; he that should come, the promised Messiah is called the delight of Israel, the proprietor of the temple, and bears the name Adonai (God). Again, in Isa. xl, 3, the same person, the Messiah is called "LORD" (Jehovah), and "our God" (Elohim). These prophecies are referred to in Matt. xi, 10, where Christ, speaking of John the Baptist, says, "This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee." Mark quotes this same prophecy in the same words used by Isaiah after saying, "The beginning of the Gospel of Jesus Christ the Son of God. As it is written in the Prophets." In Luke first chapter, it is recorded that Zacharias was filled with the Holy Ghost, and prophesied of the child John, saying, "And thou child shalt be called the prophet of the Highest, for thou shalt go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways." Again, in Luke vii, 27, Christ says of John the Baptist, "This is he of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face which shall prepare thy way before thee." The prophecy that Jehovah would suddenly come to his temple, imports that he would come soon or immediately after the appearance of his forerunner, suddenly, or immediately after the voice of him

crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make straight a high-way for our God." He, Jehovah, would come to his temple. John the Baptist utters the voice, preaches repentance, and gives notice of the coming of Jehovah; Jesus Christ comes to the temple and thus fulfills the prophecy. The argument is of the same nature and force as another. God created the world, Jesus Christ created the world, therefore Jesus Christ is God. Jehovah will come to his temple. This coming to the temple is the coming of Jesus Christ, therefore Jesus Christ is Jehovah.

We now proceed to the same identification of Jehovah and Christ by the collation of passages in which the leadership of Israel out of Egypt and the making of the covenants with them are spoken of. When God appeared to Moses on Mount Horeb, and spoke to him out of the burning bush, commissioning him to go down into Egypt and lead Israel out of bondage, Moses inquired, Exod. iii, 13-17: "Behold, when I come unto the children of Israel, and say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they shall say to me, What is his name? what shall I say unto them? God said unto Moses, I AM that I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children, I AM hath sent me unto you. And God said moreover unto Moses, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel,

The LORD [Jehovah] God of your fathers, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob, hath sent me unto you. And say unto them, I have surely visited you, and seen that which is done to you in Egypt: And I have said, I will bring you up out of the affliction of Egypt unto the land of the Canaanites, unto a land flowing with milk and honey." It is sufficient for the present purpose to note here, that it is Jehovah that appears to Moses and he, Jehovah, promises to bring Israel up out of the affliction of Egypt. In the sixth chapter the same things are repeated with increased emphasis. "God spake to Moses and said, I am Jehovah, I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob by the name of God Almighty, but by my name JEHOVAH was I not known to them. I have established my covenant with them to give them the land of Canaan. I have also heard the groaning of the children of Israel whom the Egyptians keep in bondage, and I have remembered my covenant. Wherefore say unto the children of Israel, I am Jehovah, and I will bring you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians, I will rid you of their bondage, and I will redeem you with a stretched out arm, and with great judgments. And I will take you to me for a people, and I will be to you a God: and ye shall know that I am Jehovah your God, which bringeth

you out from under the burdens of the Egyptians. And I will bring you in unto the land, concerning the which I did swear to give it to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob; and I will give it to you for an heritage; I am Jehovah." Nothing can be clearer than that it is here promised that the God of Israel, Jehovah, the great and eternal God, will himself bring his people Israel out of Egypt and give them an inheritance in Palestine.

In Exod. xix, it is recorded that Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke because Jehovah descended upon it in fire, and Jehovah came down upon Mount Sinai on the top of the mount; the priests and people were forbidden to come near, but Moses and Aaron were called up unto the top of the mountain to the immediate presence of God, and then and there the commandments were given, the covenant was made, the Mosaic dispensation was in form inaugurated. The Aaronical and Levitical priesthood was instituted, the laws, the commandments, the judgments were given, and they are recorded from the twentieth chapter onward, beginning with these words: "And God spake all these words, saying, I am the LORD [Jehovah], thy God which brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me." Here note that the being or person, as pleases, who was revealed on Mount Horeb to Moses as JEHOVAH, and who

promised to bring Israel out of Egypt is the same being or person who here on Mount Sinai makes the covenant of the Old Testament. In Exod. xxiii, 20–23, it is written, “Behold, I send an angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. . . . For mine angel shall go before thee and bring thee in unto the Amorites and the Canaanites.” Here Jehovah, who had promised to bring his people to their inheritance in Canaan, speaks of sending his angel, not an angel, but “mine angel,” before them to bring them in unto the Canaanites; the Israelites are to obey him, he has the prerogative of forgiving transgressions. God’s name is in him. In the continued history there is no evidence of any change in the leadership of the people, or in the administration of affairs, no change in the confidence the people had that God was their guide, their deliverer, and the giver of their inheritance, until we come to the record concerning the golden calf. Exod. xxxiii, 1–3: “And the LORD said unto Moses, Depart, and go up hence, thou and the people which thou hast brought up out of the land of Egypt, unto the land which I sware unto Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob, saying, Unto thy seed will I give it: And I will send an Angel before thee.

and I will drive out the Canaanite, the Amorite, and the Hittite: unto a land flowing with milk and honey; for I will not go up in the midst of thee; for thou art a stiff-necked people; lest I consume thee in the way." On this announcement all the people mourned. Moses pitched the tabernacle afar off from the camp; and while the people, every man in his tent door looked after him, Moses went into the tabernacle, and the cloudy pillar descended, and the LORD (Jehovah) talked with Moses face to face, as a man speaketh unto his friend, while all the people rose up and worshiped. "And Moses said unto the LORD, See, thou sayest unto me, Bring up this people, and thou hast not let me know whom thou wilt send with me. If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. For wherein shall it be known that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us? And the LORD said unto Moses, I will do this thing also that thou hast spoken."

Here it is to be remarked that while the promise to send "*mine* angel" produced no change in the administration of affairs or in the confidence of Moses and the people, the announcement that He would not go up in the midst of them, but would send *an* angel, produced great consternation, mourning, penitence, a turning to the Lord, and fervent supplication and interces-

sion that God's presence would still be vouchsafed unto them. Jehovah promises the same presence they had enjoyed aforetime; they are satisfied and go on their way rejoicing. The leader of Israel is Jehovah their God; he is also God's angel, in whom is God's name; whom Jehovah sends before his people. Moses and the people, though greatly afflicted when an angel is proffered as their guide, recognize no difference between Jehovah himself and his angel whom he sends before them. Jehovah, or he who is the same, his Angel, in whom is his name, is also the giver of the covenant made on Mount Sinai.

Now, we turn to Jeremiah xxxi, 31-34: "Behold the days come, saith the LORD [Jehovah], that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; after those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD." Beyond question

this is a reference to the covenant of Sinai, and a prophecy that the same being or person who made that older covenant would, in after days, make a new one; in which the law of God should be, by the supernatural spiritual agency of the same Jehovah, written in the hearts of men. In Hebrew viii, 8–11, this prophecy of Jeremiah is quoted well-nigh verbatim in connection with an argument to show that Christ was “the Mediator of a better covenant established upon better promises.” Eleven chapters of the Epistle to the Hebrews, beginning with the announcement that “God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son,” are written with the evident design of showing that Christ was the promised Messiah, the high-priest foreshadowed by the high-priest of the temple and by Melchizedek; that the Christian Church was the antitype of the Church in the wilderness and Church of the temple; that the Gospel of the Son of God—of Jesus Christ—was that of which the Mosaic and Levitical institutions were but types. The law given by Moses was the old covenant, the grace and truth that came by Jesus Christ was the new. Christ is the giver of the new covenant; the giver of the new is the same person that gave the old; the giver of the old is Jehovah; therefore the Christ of the New

Testament and the Jehovah of the Old are the same person. If Christ be the Jehovah of the Old Testament, then the essential Deity, of which that uncommunicable title was indicative, belongs to Christ.—Christ is God.

Other instances of a clear identification of Jehovah and Christ might be given, such as, “Moses esteemed the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt,” and “Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed by serpents;” but the argument does not require it. If we adopt the trinitarian theology and conceive that the infinite God comes out of his eternity and reveals himself to the world but seldom in the person of the Father, usually in the person of the Son; that by the Son, chiefly, God creates, upholds, and governs the world, then that which seems to be a confusion of distinctions and identifications in the persons speaking and spoken of whenever God is revealed finds an easy and ready explanation. The being is one, hence the identification; the persons are two or three, hence the distinctions. Then, also, what seems to be a confused application of names, titles, and terms, receives a ready explication. Jehovah is absolute being. The Father is Jehovah, because he is God; but he is not the Son, but the begetter and sender of the Son. The Son is Jehovah, because he is God; but he is not the

Father, but is begotten of and sent by the Father. There is but one only and eternal Jehovah, but one eternal and absolute being; but in the one Jehovah there are three persons, each of whom may assume the divine title, to each of whom the title may be applied.

5. *Logos—The Word, The Word of God.*—The Targums, which were Chaldaic paraphrases of the Hebrew Scriptures made for the use of the people who, during their captivity, lost the knowledge of their vernacular, rendered the names of the deity by the phrase, “The Word of the Lord.” In the Hebrew itself, there are instances in which the term “The Word of the Lord” is used in a manner indicating that personal attributes are ascribed to “The Word” as distinguished from the Lord himself. These facts may account for the use of the term “Logos” in the first verse of John’s Gospel; and this being admitted, we have another instance in which an Old Testament name of the God of Israel is ascribed to Christ. But evidently this instance is of but slight importance after it has been fully shown that such titles as God, God blessed forever, Our God, God of hosts, Jehovah, and Jehovah Sabaoth, are frequently, without qualification or restriction, ascribed to Christ, and ascribed in such connections as forbid any other construction than that which regards the terms as used in their highest sense.

ATTRIBUTES.

Divine attributes are ascribed to Christ. Characteristics which belong to no being but God; perfections without limitation, infinite and absolute, are in so many instances ascribed to Christ, that if Christ be not God, then is the Bible the most misleading book extant—misleading in a matter fundamental to religion; and if an error, the greatest error the human mind can embrace; unless it be thought that atheism were a greater error than the worship of a creature. Nor is this mere theory; for, during nearly two thousand years, Christendom, with inconsiderable exceptions, has understood the Bible as teaching the divinity of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; and the practice and experience of well-nigh the whole Christian Church has conformed to this faith.

1. *Eternity and Immutability.*—Isaiah ix, 6: “Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder; and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father.” That this is a prophecy of the incarnation of Christ and a description of his nature and offices, is sufficiently evident from the fact that it will apply to no one else; and that it affirms both his humanity and divinity is evident, because it is not applicable to him unless he be both human and

divine. The name "Everlasting Father" has no meaning unless it affirm his eternity. It has been rendered "The Father of the Everlasting age," and "The Father of Eternity." What may be the precise reason for the form of the expression may be above the possibilities of human knowledge. A metaphysical speculation may be innocent here, even though it be useless. In the order of thought, succession is antecedent to duration. Were there not in consciousness an apprehension of succession, duration, as an object of thought, as a rational conception, could not be, though abstractly and metaphysically it were itself the same as when cognized in thought. Time, duration, eternity, to have existence as a rational conception—that which it really is more than any thing else—then, postulates the existence of a rational, intelligent, personal being. The speculation, then, is, that the "child born," the "son given," in his pre-existent being was that rational person whose conscious apprehension of his own successive thoughts was the occasion of, was the source of, was the Father of the everlasting age; his conscious being was that which rendered eternity a rational conception. Taken in this view, the term "Everlasting Father" predicates eternity in the highest conceivable sense. This, in the absence of any thing better, may, psychologically, account for the form of the expression; but all this aside,

the title in any case affirms the eternity of our Lord Jesus Christ. John i, 2: "The same was in the beginning with God." Fix any point in past eternity as "the beginning," and Logos *was*; therefore he is eternal.

John viii, 57, 58: "Then said the Jews unto him, Thou art not yet fifty years old, and hast thou seen Abraham? Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, before Abraham was, *I am*." No interpretation worthy of discussion can be given these words of our Lord, other than that which makes the passage an unqualified claim to eternal existence. The Socinian gloss given above, under the head of Christ's pre-existence, does not merit repetition. Heb. xiii, 8: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever." Here both immutability and eternity are predicated of Christ. Heb. i, 10, 12: "Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth, and the heavens are the works of thine hands. They shall perish, but thou remainest, and they shall wax old as doth a garment; and as a vesture shalt thou fold them up, and they shall be changed; but thou art the same, and thy years shall not fail." In this, as in Psalm cii, from which it is quoted, God is addressed as existent before all worlds; as the creator of all things; as having absolute power to preserve and to destroy with infinite ease, and as remaining the same after great changes in the

material universe; all of which has primary reference to the underlying ideas of immutability and eternity. That in Hebrews the passage is applied to God's Son does not admit of question. Therefore, on the authority of this Scripture, the attributes of immutability and eternity are ascribed to Christ. Rev. i, 17, 18: "I am the first and the last; I am he that liveth and was dead." xxii, 13: "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end, the first and the last. In Rev. i, 8, it is written, "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." That these are the words of the risen and ascended Christ, who made the revelation to his servant John, is apparent on the whole surface of the book. It is Christ that speaks every-where else, and, therefore, surely here. That eternity, immutability, and unlimited power are claimed is beyond dispute.

2. *Omnipresence*.—John iii, 13: "No man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven." The assumption that to ascend to heaven is to learn religious truths, and to come down from heaven is to teach them, requires no reply, since it obviously makes the passage teach what is false, for other men besides Jesus have learned and taught religion. This means nothing, or

teaches falsehood, or Jesus was in some sense in heaven when he, incarnate, was on earth in conversation with Nicodemus. To be in heaven and in earth at the same time is not, to human thought, possible to any but to him who fills all space with an all-pervading presence. Matt. xviii, 20: "For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." To suppose the presence here promised figurative and not literal, is to defeat the purpose for which it was given. In the context, Christ prescribes the jurisdiction of the Church; gives the law for Church discipline in case of trespass among brethren, one against another. He assures the Church of divine sanction in case proceedings be after the manner and in the spirit he prescribed—"Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven." An authorized, regularly constituted Church may consist of no more than two or three members; and, apparently, lest it should be conceived that such high prerogatives could belong only to large numbers, he proceeds to affirm that if two shall agree on earth as touching any thing they shall ask, it shall be done for them of his Father which is in heaven; and then he specifies the basis on which rest the high prerogatives of the Church in the discipline of its members, and its exalted privilege in prayer; namely, the presence of Christ himself, the great

Head of the Church, in every assembly, however small, that shall be gathered in his name and shall agree to ask according to his will. That due reverence for divine authority, proper caution that proceedings be according to the divine will, and appropriating faith in the divine promise that whatsoever is asked shall be done, could be inspired by the promise of a figurative presence, it is preposterous to suppose. So great prerogatives in discipline, and so great power in prayer, can be claimed only by such assemblies as have the divine presence; guiding proceedings, inspiring prayers, rectifying decisions, and conferring blessings. Again, if the passage be taken from its connection, and be regarded as a general promise designed to encourage men to organize themselves in Church relations, to forsake not the assembling of themselves together for mutual edification in religion and for the public worship of God, still the promise is of no avail toward the purpose contemplated, unless it be a promise of the literal and not a figurative presence of the Master. To fulfill such a promise—to be personally present in all parts of the world where two or three are met together in his name—requires that he be himself an omnipresent being. Matt. xxviii, 19, 20: “And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth; go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing

them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." The history of the Church clearly evinces that it is not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of God, that the Gospel has made its way in the world. Every true minister of the Lord Jesus Christ feels most profoundly assured that without Christ he can do nothing; he is not of himself sufficient for the things committed to his charge, or for the things required at his hand; his sufficiency is of God; his trust and confidence is in the promise, "Lo! I am with you alway." All true ministers in all parts of the world, all at the same time, are conscious of such a need; all trust in the same promise in this same sense, and all find the promise fulfilled according to their faith. Thus to sustain his servants, Christ must be every-where. Col. i, 16, 17: "By him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible; he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Here, Christ is affirmed to be not only the creator of all things, but also by him all things consist—that is, are preserved, upheld, kept in being. The same thing is affirmed in Heb. i, 3: "Upholding all things by the word of his power." Now, he who preserves all things must be every-where present. Christ

is the preserver of all created things, therefore he is omnipresent—he is God.

3. *Omniscience*.—It is objected against the ascription of infinite knowledge to our Lord Jesus Christ that he himself says, Mark xiii, 32: “But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only.” This is confessedly the strongest anti-trinitarian text in the Bible; if any where in the Holy Scriptures the divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ is denied, it is in this passage. But the denial is antagonized by so many Scripture evidences that the faithful exegete is bound to inquire whether an explanation that shall harmonize with other Scriptures, or at least not antagonize them, may not be found; and if one that is admissible be found, it should be adopted on the principle that one passage should not overbalance many that are equally explicit. If Christ be God, he knows all things, and, as God, is not ignorant of the day of his coming to final judgment. But the Word is God; the Father and the Son are one; therefore Christ is omniscient. But if so, how can he be ignorant of the day of judgment? an explanation is required. Some have questioned the genuineness of the clause “neither the Son,” but though the clause is not found in the parallel passage, Matt. xxiv, 36, the objection is not generally satisfactory. Others affirm that

the term "know" in this passage should be taken in the causative sense, cause to know; that is, to teach or declare, as when St. Paul says he is determined to know nothing but Christ and him crucified; and allege that Acts i, 7, is a parallel text,—“It is not for you to know the times and the seasons which the Father hath put in his own power;” that is to say, both passages affirm that no man, neither the angels nor the Son proclaims the day of judgment, the Father having reserved the right of proclamation to himself. This might do, if it were easy to conceive in what sense, how, or when, the Father is to proclaim it. If, by the actual coming of the day itself, the words of Christ seem, if not void of meaning, to be a most unnatural form of expression for the thought intended. The more satisfactory exegesis is that which affirms that Christ here speaks as a man. As to his human nature “Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.” Luke ii, 52. We think of him as a child born and as a human infant ignorant of all things; then acquiring knowledge as other human beings acquire it. To make such distinctions between his humanity and his divinity and yet hold to the perfect union of the two natures in one person, is of course difficult, and in this consists the difficulty of the text under consideration. The most we can claim is, that the interpretation is possible,

is admissible, and for adequate reasons ought to be adopted. We insist that such reasons are found in the abundant evidence we have that Christ is eternal, immutable, every-where present; has divine attributes, and is named by divine titles.

The direct Scripture evidence usually adduced in proof of the infinite knowledge of Christ consists mostly of those passages which speak of him as having such a knowledge of the thoughts and intents of man as is possible only to God; such as John xvi, 30: "Now are we sure that thou knowest all things, and needest not that any man should ask thee: by this we believe that thou comest forth from God;" that is, thou knowest what we desire to know before we ask thee; and again, "Peter said, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." On many occasions Christ is spoken of as "knowing what is in man," "perceiving the thoughts" of those about him, and knowing in such a way and to such an extent as implies the knowledge of all things.

4. *Omnipotence*.—The unlimited power of Christ is evinced by the works ascribed to him.

5. *Works*.—Creation is ascribed to Christ in John i, 3: "All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made;" also, in verse tenth, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not." Col. i, 16: "For by him

were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: and he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Heb. i, 2: "By whom also he made the worlds:" ver. 10: "And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands." This passage in Hebrew is a quotation from Psalm cii, 25, 26, 27, where it is used in devout adoration before the God of Israel. The collation of these Scriptures shows most clearly that creation, eternity, and immutability in the highest sense conceived in Scripture, are ascribed to Christ; that Christ and Jehovah are the same person; and yet not the same as God the Father. Can any theory except that of the trinity interpret these passages without absurdity?

I Cor. viii, 6, "To us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." There are two methods of attempting to avoid this testimony; first, it is claimed that the things created or made are the moral and religious interests pertaining to Christ's kingdom; second, whatever may be the things created, whether the institutions of the Church, or the material universe, and

whatever may be intended by creation, whether it be the organization of pre-existent matter, or the producing of real substance out of nothing, in any case, what Christ did when he is said to create, he did by delegated power. God did it by him. If when the sacred writers use such terms as all things that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers, they mean nothing more than the prudential arrangements of the visible Church; then they may be justly charged with using language so misleading as to destroy all confidence in their writings. The Bible is of no value, is not worthy of consideration, if its language is so foreign to its intended thoughts. That the work spoken of in the first verse of Genesis and in the first verse of John is such a work as could be done by any power that can be delegated seems preposterous. Creation, whatever it is, is every-where referred to in the Bible as a work of the infinite God; a work that requires all power. No being but God can create; creation requires Omnipotence, and Omnipotence can not be delegated. God created the world; but Christ created the world; therefore Christ and God are the same. And yet God created the world by Christ and for Christ; in some sense then Christ is not the same as God. God the Son, is not the same person, though the same

being, as God the Father. The doctrine of trinity, and it only, interprets the Scriptures.

Christ preserves and governs all things. The passages above quoted sufficiently affirm this: "He upholds all things by the word of his power." "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work." "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not; but if I do, though ye believe not me, believe the works." Here Christ claims to do the same things that God does in preserving and governing the world.

He forgives sin, Luke v, 20-24: "And when he saw their faith he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee. And the Scribes and the Pharisees began to reason, saying, Who is this which speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone? But when Jesus perceived their thoughts, he answering said unto them, What reason ye in your hearts? Whether is easier, to say, Thy sins are forgiven thee, or to say, Rise up and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power upon earth to forgive sins (he said unto the sick of the palsy), I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy couch and go unto thine house." Acts v, 31: "Him hath God exalted with his right hand, to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance unto Israel, and forgiveness of sins." Christ sends the Spirit, will raise the dead, and judge the world, at the last day.

6. *Divine worship is paid to Christ.*—The Greek word translated worship sometimes designates such acts of civility as are paid to civil rulers and superiors; so that, wherever during his life-time it is recorded that his disciples and others worshiped him, if the nature of the case will allow, it is proper to regard the word as expressing simply the deference paid to him as a superior. But the same word is used to express the worship which is due only to God. If, therefore, the nature of the case require, the record must be regarded as a record of an act of divine worship. It is to be remembered that Christ persistently refused all attentions that looked toward making him a king, and rebuked the extravagant adulations paid to and received by the Rabbis, the Scribes, and the Pharisees; and yet he frequently received the acts of devotion rendered him by his admirers. In what sense were these acts of worship offered by his disciples, and in what sense were they received by him at their hands?

Matt. ix, 18: "There came a certain ruler and worshiped him, saying, My daughter is even now dead; but come and lay thy hand upon her, and she shall live." Here is worship paid and received, which was offered in the faith that he could raise the dead; was it a mere act of politeness? or was it an act of religious worship? xiv, 23: "Then they that were in the ship came and

worshiped him, saying, Of a truth thou art the Son of God." They call him the Son of God, a divine title; they worship him as such, and the special inspiration of their devotion at that time was awakened by witnessing his power over the winds and the waves, in that he himself had walked upon the waters, caused Peter to do the same, and had caused the boisterous winds suddenly to cease. Such worship under such circumstances must be more than mere politeness. John ix, 38: "And he said, Lord, I believe, and he worshiped him." The man born blind, to whom the Savior gave sight, boldly, before the Sanhedrim, affirmed and maintained that he was a prophet; but when, after the Sanhedrim had cast him out, the Savior sought him and said unto him, "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" he said, "Who is he, Lord, that I might believe on him?" and when the Savior replied, "Thou hast both seen him and it is he that talketh with thee," then "he said, Lord, I believe, and he worshiped him." This was worship paid God's Son, inspired by the convictions and sentiments which a miracle, such as none but God can do, had awakened in his adoring grateful heart, and such worship Jesus accepted. But after our Savior's ascension, no act of worship can be a matter of mere civility.

Does the Bible recognize any worship of

superior beings or disembodied spirits, not God, as lawful? In the instances recorded of worship paid to Christ after his resurrection and ascension, may that worship be of an inferior grade of devotion, and such as may be paid to a being less than God? The total absence of any intimation of a superior and an inferior worship, together with the injunction every-where insisted upon to worship God and him alone, would seem sufficient to settle such a question. Angel worship and Mariolatry find no more warrant from Scripture authority, than does the worship of the sun, moon, or stars, or idolatry in any of its forms. In the light of the Bible, no being but God is allowed to be an object of the heart's devotion. To him, and to him alone, are prayers, thanksgivings, intercessions, and adorations to be offered. Worship God, is the authoritative mandate of the divine Word.

Luke xxiv, 51, 52: "He was parted from them and carried up into heaven; and they worshiped him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy." Acts i, 24: "And they prayed and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all men, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen." That this prayer was offered to Christ may be reasonably inferred from the recognized fact that Christ himself appoints his apostles and ministers. He is the head of his Church, and the source of all power and authority

invested in its officers. Acts vii, 59, 60: "And they stoned Stephen calling upon God and saying, Lord Jesus receive my spirit. And he kneeled down and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge; and when he had said this he fell asleep." Stephen, "being full of the Holy Ghost, looked steadfastly up into heaven, and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God, and said, Behold, I see the heavens opened, and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God;" and then, amid the glories of this vision, while the stones cast at him were beating out his life, he prays to the Lord Jesus (the word *God* in the text is an interpolation of the translators), committing to Christ's hands the destiny of his immortal spirit, and interceding with Christ in behalf of his persecutors that their sin might not be laid to their charge. It is not conceivable that a man can be placed in circumstances which would more surely lead a pious heart immediately to God than these under which Stephen, full of the Holy Ghost, prays to Jesus. There are no interests to a dying man greater than the welfare of his soul in the eternal world. If man may commit any interest immediately to God, he may commit his soul; if at any time, certainly in the moment of his dying. Stephen's worship was the highest man, in his earthly life, can offer. In all human history, no man has ever come nearer

or more immediately to God than did Stephen in the hour of his death. He worshiped God if man ever did; but he worshiped Christ. Christ, therefore, is God. And yet he saw Christ standing on the right hand of God; though the same in some sense, yet not the same in every sense. Trinity alone explains this—God the Father and God the Son are one in substance, two in person. 2 Cor. xii, 8, 9: “For this thing I besought the Lord thrice that it might depart from me, and he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” Here note that the power of Christ, the strength, and the sufficient grace, are the same; but the strength, grace, power, belong to him to whom Paul prays; therefore Paul’s prayer, thrice offered for release from his infirmity, was a prayer to Christ.

Phil. ii, 5–11: “Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who being in the form of God thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and

given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Is it said that the universal bowing of the knee and the universal confessing of the tongue, or, in other words, the honor and homage here claimed for Christ, is because of an exaltation which God *gave* him in compensation for his benevolent interposition and humiliation in man's behalf, and is not an homage belonging to him by natural right, due his eternal essential nature? let it be considered how it could be to the glory of God the Father that the intelligences of the universe should worship Christ, confessing that he is Lord, unless he is really so. And again, how could the condescension of any being less than God be rightly deserving of such divine honor? If, however, the trinitarian idea be admitted, and the eternal Logos be conceived as emptying himself of the glory he had with the Father before the world was, and becoming flesh and being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, then his exaltation as a theanthropic person would be an exaltation to divine honors in compensation for a divine condescension. No being but God can so condescend as to deserve therefor an exaltation to a divine homage. It is to the glory of the Father

that the Son should receive equal honor, because the Father and the Son are one. Again, the Father spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. He so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth might not perish, but have everlasting life. It is the will of the Father that all men should honor the Son even as they honor the Father. The conscious adoration awakened in a pious mind by an apprehension of redeeming love is unto God, through Christ; the love of the Father and the love of the Son are both one and equal, and the honor is one and equal. The exaltation of the God-man in this view calls forth a responsive amen from the admiring and adoring intelligences both of heaven and of earth. With this view, every knee will gladly bow, and every tongue gratefully confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

Heb. i, 6: "And again when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him." There is some difficulty, and consequently some difference of opinion among critics, in determining the passage in the Old Testament from which this is quoted. It may be Psalm xcvi, 7: "Worship him all ye gods;" it may be the Septuagint version of Deut. xxxii, 43, where these precise words occur: "Let all the angels of God worship him," though

they are not found in the common version. But if the Jehovah of the Old Testament and the Christ of the New be the same person, then the passage may be regarded as an embodiment of the tenor and import of a large portion of the Old Testament writings. The passage is, by divine inspiration, in the New Testament, and is in such language as admits of no other interpretation than that usually given it. It is an assertion plain and unmistakable, that God, at some time, commanded the angels to worship Christ. That God should command the intelligences of heaven to worship a created being, or any being less than God, is as impossible as it is that idolatry should cease to be detestable.

2 Thess. ii, 16, 17: "Now our Lord Jesus Christ himself, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort your hearts and establish you in every good work"—a prayer offered equally to Christ and the Father for spiritual blessings. 2 Tim. iv, 22: "The Lord Jesus be with thy spirit"—prayer offered exclusively to Christ. 1 Cor. i, 2: "Unto the Church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." To call upon the name of our Lord Jesus

Christ is characteristic of a Christian believer. 2 Peter iii, 18: "But grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and forever. Amen." Rev. v, 8-14: "And when he had taken the book, the four beasts and four and twenty elders fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps and golden vials full of odors, which are the prayers of saints; and they sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and nation, and hast made us unto our God kings and priests, and we shall reign on the earth. And I beheld and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands, saying with a loud voice, Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing. And every creature which is in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honor and glory and power be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb forever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshiped him that

liveth forever and ever.” Rev. vii, 9, 10: “After this I beheld, and lo, a great multitude which no man could number, of all nations and kindred and people and tongues, stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.”

Such is a brief representation of the Scripture testimony respecting God and Christ. We have seen that the Scriptures teach that God is one; that there is a distinction in the Godhead—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that to the Son are ascribed the titles, the attributes, the works, and the worship which belong only to God; that Jehovah and Jesus are the same person; that the eternal Logos, the Son of God, took human nature in the womb of the virgin, became a man with a rational soul and a material body; was a theanthropic Christ—two distinct natures, the human and divine, united in one person.

With these views the whole tenor of the Scriptures corresponds; to transcribe all that directly or indirectly teach them would be to transcribe well-nigh the whole Bible. The chief difficulty we meet in accepting these views is found in the impossibility of conceiving the mode of a Trinity; in conceiving how there can be a distinction of persons in the Godhead when at the same time

the Godhead is to be conceived as essentially, eternally and necessarily *one*; and the same difficulty is found in attempting to conceive the mode of the hypostatic union in Christ, how two natures can be so united as to constitute one person. These difficulties, however, are of the same nature, though perhaps greater, if one impossibility can be greater than another, as the difficulty found in every attempt we make to conceive the absolute and the infinite. God is incomprehensible; we can no more comprehend ubiquity than we can comprehend Trinity. It may be conceded, if it be a concession, that if the Scriptures which teach or appear to teach the doctrine of three persons in the Godhead were few in number, and if the general tenor and import of Scripture teachings harmonized with the idea of but one person in the Godhead, then and in that case it would be obligatory to admit any possible exegesis of those few passages that would bring them into correspondence with the idea of unity in personality; but when it is obvious that without such a wresting of the Word of God as annihilates all reliable significancy, a very large portion of the inspired writings must be interpreted as teaching a three-fold distinction in the personality of the Godhead, and when with this distinction all Scripture harmonizes, it becomes impossible to accept the Bible as authoritative in any common-sense acceptance

without also accepting the trinitarian idea of God as the proper and legitimate interpretation of the Bible testimony concerning him. Jesus Christ is a divine person, or the Bible is a misleading and an unreliable book. Neither Patripassianism nor semi-Arianism, much less Arianism or Socinianism rightly interprets the Holy Scriptures. There is no middle ground; orthodox Christianity is the religion of the Bible, and if it is not the truth of God, then there is no religion in the world deserving confidence beyond the most naked rationalistic theism.

CHAPTER V.

THE PERSONALITY AND DIVINITY OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

THE doctrine of the Holy Spirit, as held by the Church during the times of the apostolic fathers and for some time subsequently, was what is revealed on the surface of the Scriptures. The disciple was baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. The benedictions of the Church recognized the three, then, as now. To the Church, the Father was God, whose law had been broken, and whose justice must be satisfied ere pardon could be expected. Christ was God's Son, who by his death had made a full and sufficient satisfaction to divine justice for the sins of men. The Holy Spirit was a divine power by which they were brought to God through Jesus Christ. These general views seemed sufficient for all the purposes of Christian experience and Church discipline; but, anon, heresies arose. Indeed, even obscure, indistinct, and inconsistent statements appeared among the most devout and orthodox.

The Bible ascribes the same work at one time to the Father, at another to the Son, and at yet another to the Holy Spirit. Hence, the Patripassians affirmed but one person; the Sabellians declared the Son and Spirit to be but influences, emanations. The Arians affirmed that the Father created the Son, and the Son created the Spirit. Many regarded the terms God and Spirit of God as expressions for the same being and same person, and not a few identified the Son and the Spirit. Then, as in all ages of the Church, as even now, among even the most devout Christians, the Spirit without any distinct formulation of the doctrine as to his nature or office, was conceived of as an influence, as power exerted, as a breath or breathing forth, as a baptism from above. The Arian heresy, affirming that the Spirit was created by the Son, aroused controversies, which, together with the controversies prevalent, in respect to the essential deity of Christ, caused the assembling of the council of Nice, in the year of our Lord 325, and that of Constantinople, in the year 381.

In the so-called apostolic creed we have simply the words, "I believe in the Holy Ghost," and the same without addition is repeated in the Nicene creed. The creed of Constantinople has these words, "I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord, the life giving, who proceedeth from the

Father, who is to be worshiped and glorified with the Father and the Son, and who spake through the prophets." The creed of Constantinople was not satisfactory to all minds, chiefly for two reasons: first, the Holy Spirit was not declared to be consubstantial with the Father and the Son; the term *homoousian*, much insisted upon by the orthodox, was omitted; second, it was declared that the Spirit proceeds from the Father only; not from the Father and the Son. At the Synod of Toledo in 589, the term *filioque*, "and the Son," was added to the symbol of Constantinople. This constituted, and still constitutes, an important dogmatic difference between the Eastern and Western Churches. The so-called Athanasian creed affirms that the Spirit is consubstantial with the Father and the Son; that he is uncreated, eternal, and omnipotent, equal in majesty and glory, and that he proceeds from the Father and the Son.

This is the present creed of the Church. During the centuries since the formulation of the creed, an opinion, perhaps more correctly a sentiment, has prevailed to an appreciable extent, and still prevails, antagonistic to the doctrine of the Spirit's personality; namely, that the Spirit of God is the power of God, is a manifested energy, not a person. It is needful, therefore, only to present those Scriptures in which the personality of the Spirit is affirmed or plainly implied. The same

Scriptures that teach his personality teach also his divinity. That when the Scriptures speak of the Spirit of God, they speak of God himself; that when they affirm that the Spirit does this or that work, they affirm that God does it, will not be questioned. That the Spirit is divine is conceded. Is he a person distinct from the Father and the Son? If so, trinitarianism is taught in the Bible; if not, not.

A person is a subject who is the conscious author of an intentional act. This involves individual consciousness, intelligence, and free-will. A person is one who can say, I, thou, he, me, my, or mine—that is, is such that the utterances of consciousness require the use of the personal pronouns. By a figure of speech, impersonal things are sometimes spoken of as if they possessed personal qualities; but in every instance of a proper personification, in the nature of the case, it is manifestly figurative and not literal language. Where personal pronouns are used literally, and personal qualities are literally spoken of, there is no difficulty in distinguishing the true character of the language used. In many passages of Scripture where the Holy Spirit is referred to, the language used may be interpreted by the supposition that the Spirit is a manifested energy, an exerted power. He is spoken of as being poured out, as coming down, as a rushing wind, as that with which, or in

which, the people are baptized. If inspiration used no other form of language in speaking of the Spirit, then the doctrine of his personality would, by a proper exegesis, be rejected; but if personal qualities are distinctly ascribed to him, then it is incumbent upon the exegete to explain those passages in which he is spoken of otherwise, by those in which he is spoken of as a person, and not the reverse. For example, we have the following, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit," and "Quench not the Spirit," where it is evident the former is literal and the latter figurative; so that we must conceive of the Spirit not as fire personified, but as mind literally susceptible of grief.

The creed affirms that the Spirit *proceeds* from the Father and the Son. That he proceeds from the Father is directly stated, especially in John xv, 25: "When the Comforter is come whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth *which proceedeth from the Father*, he shall testify of me." But the Spirit is frequently spoken of as sustaining the same relation to the Son as to the Father, and never in any different relation. He is called the Spirit of God and the Spirit of the Father; he is also called the Spirit of the Son. He is said to be sent by the Father, and is also sent by the Son. If, then, the relations of the Spirit to the Son be in all other regards the same as his relations to the Father, it would seem that

the Church is thereby fully warranted in affirming, as it does, that he proceeds from the Father *and the Son*. The "filioque," notwithstanding the objections of the Eastern Churches, may be retained in the creed. It is obvious to remark, that what is precisely intended by the term procession, as applied to the Spirit, can not be definitely and exhaustively stated. When it is said that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son, it is intended to make, on Scripture authority, an affirmation concerning the manner of the distinction subsisting between the persons of the trinity. The *quo modo*, here as every-where else, lies outside the purview of human science. We know no more of the procession of the Spirit than we do of the generation of the Son; we know nothing of either, beyond the Bible affirmation of the facts that the Son is begotten of the Father, and that the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son.

Gen. i, 2: "The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters." Psalm xxxiii, 6: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath (spirit) of his mouth." Job xxxiii, 4: "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." Here the Spirit is represented as connected with the work of creation, and the texts, taken in connection with other portions of the Word of inspiration, plainly ascribe creation to

the Spirit, as they also ascribe creation to the Father and to the Son. Psalm civ, 27-30: "These all wait upon thee, that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. Thou hidest thy face, they are troubled; thou takest away their breath, they die and return to dust; thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth." Here the work of preservation is ascribed to the Spirit.

In numerous instances in the Old Testament, the Spirit of God is said to be given unto men, as in the case of Joseph, of Moses, and indeed of all the Lord's prophets, by which bestowment they become men of supernatural wisdom, power, executive efficiency, of extraordinary purity and holiness; all of which implies, that the Spirit given unto them was a somewhat possessing personal qualities. Acts xiii, 1-4: "As they ministered to the Lord, and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them. So they being sent forth by the Holy Ghost departed unto Seleucia." This language is misleading, if nothing more be meant than that the brethren who were ministering and fasting were unanimously, strongly, and religiously impressed that it was the duty of Paul and Barnabas to become missionaries. Some supernatural intimation of the divine will seems clearly declared, and it is as distinctly affirmed that that intimation

was by words which "the Holy Ghost said." The Holy Ghost appoints the missionaries, commands the Church to consecrate them, selects their fields of labor—first at Seleucia and afterward at Cyprus—and then sends them forth. That this implies that the Spirit is a person is evident without comment. Acts xv, 28: "It seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things." Is this simply saying, that it was the pious judgment of the apostles that circumcision should not be required of Gentile converts? If not merely this, then the apostolic council had knowledge of the divine will communicated to them by the Holy Ghost as being the will of the Holy Ghost. The Spirit, then, must be a divine person. Rom. viii, 26: "The Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered." Interceding with an intensity of interest expressed by unutterable groanings, is certainly the act of a person. A thing, an attribute, an influence, an exerted power, can not be conceived of as interceding at all, much less with such intensity of interest, such depth of sympathy. Acts v, 3, 4: "But Peter said, Ananias, why hath Satan filled thy heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God." Can men lie to an influence, an attribute, a power? Here, not only is personality plainly implied, but divinity is

also at least apparently asserted. The assertion is not equal to the words, The Holy Ghost is God; but if the Spirit be not God, then Peter spoke carelessly, in a manner fatally misleading. To say that Ananias lied to the Holy Ghost, and in the same breath to say he lied to God, is certainly well-nigh saying the Holy Ghost is God.

1. Cor. iii, 16: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you." The indwelling of the Spirit and the indwelling of God are the same thing. Luke xii, 12: "For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say." John xiv, 26: "But the Comforter which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." Teaching, quickening remembrances, and comforting are personal offices; acts, not performed by things, but by persons. John xvi, 8: "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." Verse 13: "When he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come." Eph. i, 13, 14: "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our

inheritance.” Rom. viii, 14–17: “As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. . . . Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ.” Here the seal, the Spirit of promise, the Spirit of adoption, the witness, the evidence of sonship and heirship, all the same, are evidently divine, and are the work of the Holy Ghost in the mind of the believer. If in Christian experience there is anywhere a divine manifestation it is certainly here, wherein the believer comes to a comfortable persuasion that he is a child of God; if in any thing man may have communion with his Maker surely it must be in that by which he is assured of pardon and acceptance; but, according to the passages just quoted, such assurance is by the Holy Ghost; therefore, the Holy Ghost is a divine person. “Hereby we know that he abideth in us by the Spirit which he hath given; hereby we know that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.”

Mark iii, 28, 29: “Verily I say unto you, All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies wherewithsoever they shall blaspheme: but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Ghost hath never forgiveness, but is in danger of

eternal damnation.” Can blasphemy against any thing or person that is not God be a greater sin than blasphemy against God? If sin against the Holy Ghost be the greatest possible sin, the only unpardonable sin, then surely the Holy Ghost must be God.

We conclude, from the very common use of personal pronouns to designate the Holy Spirit, from the ascription to him of personal qualities and personal acts, from the association of his name with that of the Father and that of the Son in works of creation, preservation, redemption, and salvation, and also in the baptismal formula, and in the apostolic benediction, that we are warranted in affirming that the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit is a divine person, equal in power, majesty, and eternity with the Father and the Son.

CHAPTER VI.

DIRECT TESTIMONY AS TO THE TRINITY.

THE question why this doctrine of the trinity is revealed not directly but indirectly is not pertinent. The question is, Is it revealed? If clearly and unmistakably found in the Word of God, the manner of the revelation is unimportant. It is, however, worthy of remark that the Bible does not reveal any doctrine in scientific formulas; it is chiefly a record of events—a statement of facts—it is in form historical, not didactic. That this mystery of the Godhead should appear in the inspired Word in the form of the creed is not, therefore, antecedently probable, though it were admitted that the creed formula were a perfect statement of the truth, because such forms are not the actual forms adopted by the sacred writers. The leading purpose of the Inspirer of the Word requires a different style of language. We, however, insist that the tenor of the Holy Scriptures throughout is what might be expected, admitting the doctrine to be true.

The first verse of the Bible, though it does not prove a plurality in the Godhead, because the plural form of the divine title may be otherwise accounted for, yet it is in harmony with the idea of a plurality; and it is possible, it can not be shown to the contrary, that the word God is in the plural form in the original, purposely to teach this idea of a plurality in unity. But, in the twenty-sixth verse, the plural form is used, and no other explanation than that of the orthodox faith is even plausible. "Let *us* make man in our image, after our likeness." Here is a plain intimation of what the creed states in form. Is it not even direct testimony as to the idea of a plural distinction in the Godhead? The distinction between Jehovah and the angel of Jehovah, and yet the identity of the two, more than suggests plurality in unity. The triple form of the Jewish benediction, the ritualistic forms of Christian baptism, and the apostolic benediction, approach the authority of a direct affirmation. The threefold form of adoration noted in Isaiah's vision, "Holy! holy! holy! is the LORD of hosts," has a significance pointing in the same direction. When the record of this vision is collated with New Testament references to it, the case seems decisive. The record is in Isaiah, sixth chapter, in which the prophet is commissioned to go unto the people and say unto them: "Ye hear but do not

understand, ye see but do not perceive." That in this vision Jehovah of hosts, the God of Israel, is revealed, will not be questioned. In John xii, 41, quoting this message of the prophet to the people, the evangelist says: "These things said Esaias when he saw his [Christ's] glory, and spake of him." And in Acts xxviii, 25, 26, we have these words: "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand, and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive."

Here we leave the subject, insisting that the Bible teaches, together with essential unity, a distinction of plurality in the Godhead—sometimes two, sometimes three, but never more. It ascribes divine titles, attributes, works, and worship, severally to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. It speaks of each as doing the same thing, thus identifying the three as it would if they were but different names for the same person, and yet it distinguishes each from the other by characteristic differences. God created the world, Christ created the world, and the Holy Ghost created the world; God dwells in the hearts of believers, Christ dwells in the hearts of believers, and the Holy Ghost dwells in the hearts of believers; it is the same indwelling Spirit that enlightens, regenerates, comforts, guides, and saves. And yet the

Father begets, the Son is begotten, and the Spirit proceeds. Paternity is never ascribed to the Son, and filiation never to the Father, and neither to the Spirit. The Father says I, the Son says I, and the Spirit says I. There are three persons, but one God—three in one—a holy Trinity, blessed forever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GOVERNMENT OF GOD.

FROM every stand-point of thought obtained in the Bible, God is postulated. The divine existence is antecedent to all beings and things else. There is nothing anterior to God; there is nothing exterior to him that is independent of him. Every existent being or thing, that is not God, is indebted for existence to the divine will. All entities and events are what they are, either by the immediate act of God or by his permission; had he willed that they should not be, or should be otherwise than they are, they had not been as they are. Is this equivalent to saying that God, from eternity, purposed or decreed that the history of the universe should be what it is, in such a sense as that his purpose or decree rendered a different history impossible? The theistic fatalist affirms that God acts from the necessity of his nature, and all that is is but the development or self-manifestation of the divine being. The Calvinistic theory affirms that the divine will is free—God might have willed

otherwise than he did, and that if he had willed otherwise than he did, the history of the universe would have been otherwise than it is.

But both agree that the divine will determines efficaciously what is. God foreordained whatsoever comes to pass—a power to the contrary of what is, does not exist. This, to our thought, is equivalent to affirming that the divine will is the sole agent in the universe—all that is not God acts only as acted upon. This excludes the idea of a moral government, and the possibility of rewardable virtue and punishable vice. Sin, properly so called, does not, and can not, exist; God's will is sole law, and all things being in exact conformity thereto, there is no such thing as anomia—non-conformity to law. The highest idea of government that this theory allows is that of natural fitness. God creates an angel, and treats him as it is fit and proper an angel should be treated; he creates a brute, and treats it as a brute should be treated; he creates a devil, or, which is the same thing, he creates a good spirit, with a purpose or decree by which he becomes a demon, and then treats him in a manner corresponding with his demoniac character. Men kill serpents because they are serpents, not because they are to blame for being what they are; and if the necessitarian theory be true, they should hang murderers for the same reason, namely, because they are

murderers, not because they are to blame for being murderers. God drowns a world of sinners because they are sinners, not because they are punishable, but because such treatment is fit and proper when exercised toward such beings; he rains fire and brimstone from heaven upon certain cities, not because the inhabitants thereof had power to be and do otherwise than they were and did, but because such a shower was most suitable for such as they were in character and conduct. And in the issue of the divine administration, the devil and his angels, with all the abominable from among men, will be cast into a lake of fire, not because they are of a different character from what God willed they should be, nor because they had done contrary to his will, for from eternity he had decreed they should be what they are, and should do what they have done—nay, more, his will has efficaciously wrought both their character and their conduct; they had no power to be otherwise than they are, or to do otherwise than they have done; they are doomed to an eternal abode in hell, solely because it is the will of God they should dwell there, or, at most, solely because that is the best place for them—the most fitting and suitable abode for such beings as God's will has caused them to be.

We have above said that the highest idea of government, that necessitarianism allows, is this

dispensing of destiny according to natural fitness. If this is not the government of God as held by necessitarians, then they have no occasion of complaint on account of what is here said; but, frankly and honestly, this is, to our thought, a logical inference from the philosophy they teach. The distinction they make between the free-will decrees of God and the self-manifestation of the theistic fatalist, and between their theory and atheistic fatalism, is a distinction without an essential difference; nay, more, the difference is against them and in favor of fatalism; for, as we see it, it is much more agreeable to think that all things are as they are by an eternal necessity than to conceive of an infinite person having all existences subject to his free-will, and by his free-will efficaciously causing the eternal death of intelligent, sentient beings; the difference is the difference between eternal fate and an infinite demon.

But it may be said, however terrible the thought, this view is, in thought, unavoidable. God's will is sole first cause of all things; sin and misery are among the things that are; therefore, they are the products of God's will. Again, it is said, to suppose the contrary—that is, to suppose that God's plan, purpose, or decree does not determine all things—is to suppose that God has no plan, that all things are uncertain, that God is not sovereign, and that he is subject to the caprices of the creatures he

has made; in other words, if God has a plan, if he is sovereign and governs the world, then his purposes so determine the futurity of all existences and events, as to exclude the possibility of the opposite—there can be no power to the contrary of what is.

We reply, first, by admitting, for sake of the argument, that the government of the universe, in accordance with a wise plan, necessarily requires that the divine will efficaciously secures the certainty of all futurity in such a sense as excludes the possibility of an opposite. This being so, it is obvious that in the beginning, before the creative nisus had caused any existence, holiness and sin in the beings to be created were equally objects of choice before the infinite will. If divine sovereignty requires that God must himself volitionate whatever may come to pass, he could as well volitionate universal holiness and happiness as in any cases to volitionate sin and misery; that is to say, God prefers, and has from eternity preferred, sin to holiness in all cases where sin occurs, and prefers misery to happiness in all cases where his creatures are miserable. If this be so, and it be also true that any one individual sentient creature of God shall be eternally miserable; if there is in the universe such a thing as eternal death, then, according to this theory, God is infinitely malignant. When it was equally competent for him to

volitionate eternal holiness and happiness he did, solely of his own sovereign will, volitionate sin and eternal misery!

But we are aware that at this point we shall be met—as is always the case when the absurdities of this system are shown—with the question, Who art thou that repliest against God? and we therefore, here once for all, answer the interrogatory. We are creatures made in the image of God, endowed with rational faculties and an intuitive sense of what is just, right, and honorable. To this sense of justice God himself appeals—“Are not my ways equal, saith the Lord?” In the exercise of these God-given faculties we reply, not against God—not against him that formed us and made us as we are, whose we are, in whom we live and have our being, and whom we worship as God blessed for evermore; but we reply against the imagined deity presented to our thought by the necessitarian theory, and most distinctly affirm that such a being must be conceived as infinitely malignant. St. Paul, here, does not attempt to silence the man who replies under a sense of outraged justice, but he rebukes the man who replies against God in a case of manifest honor and right. That God had admitted the Gentiles to equal religious privileges with the Jews, was a matter evidently equitable and right, and the Jews who replied against it deserved to be rebuked.

It is not asserted that necessitarians believe in and worship a malignant deity, but that the necessitarian theory logically involves the inference that, under God's government, men are eternally punished for doing what it was impossible for them to leave undone, and for not doing what it was impossible for them to do; and this, to our thought, is the highest conceivable injustice. Necessitarians affirm that "God foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, yet so as thereby God is not the author of sin, nor is the contingency of second causes taken away, but rather established." We concede to them, because they claim it, that they are able to unite the two parts of this creed, but affirm that to our thought this is impossible. If God has so decreed whatsoever comes to pass as that his decree so secures the event that the contrary is impossible, then is God the author of all things, sin included; or, more properly, there is no such thing as sin; just punishment is impossible, and moral government is excluded. The difference between God's government as to men and as to brutes is the same as between his government as to brutes and as to inert matter—a difference solely in the subject, not any difference as to principle or manner of administration; an invincible connection between antecedent and consequent is maintained throughout the whole; the law of necessity governs all existences and all events.

But it is said that these consequences are just as deducible from the foreknowledge of God as from his decrees; the decree doing nothing more than to secure the certainty of the event foreknown. That necessitarianism is involved in the admission of the divine prescience seems in the consideration of the abettors of this theory the stronghold of their system; they seem to rely upon it more than upon any other metaphysical argument. Now, so far as we are concerned, the labor of constructing this argument might be avoided; for all that foreknowledge does is to *prove* the certainty of future events, and that must be admitted without proof; all things will be as they will be, whether known or not, whether decreed or not; the future history of the universe will be in one single way and not two. But, while this is true, it is also true that an infinite number of ways are possible; not merely conceivably possible, but actually possible. This, however, though decisive as to the main question in dispute, is not a direct answer to the difficulty here in view. It is said God knew before creation that certain beings to be created would sin and make themselves miserable; in the light of this knowledge he actually created them, therefore their sin and misery were the products of his will; he chose their sin and misery in preference to the contrary—he prefers sin to holiness in cases where sin occurs.

This is a plain *non sequitur*—he chose the *existence* of moral beings in preference to their *non-existence*; he did not choose, prefer, purpose, or decree their sin; he has no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, and, therefore, he has never brought to pass a state of things in which death was unavoidable. The existence of moral beings, in any condition infinite goodness will permit, is better than their non-existence; that God chose to create such beings evinces his infinite goodwill; that he made, by his eternal purpose in Christ Jesus, an adequate remedy for all the foreseen evil consequences of endowing finite beings with a free moral agency, fully vindicates God's ways in the administration of human affairs.

The optimistic argument, though discussed elsewhere in these pages, deserves a brief notice here. It is, in substance,—since infinite wisdom must know the best possible history for the universe, and since infinite goodness must prompt the selection of that best, it is reasonably inferable that God has purposed and decreed that that best shall come to pass. Our reply is, the highest good of the universe is without doubt secured by the decrees and acts of God, but it is so secured in spite of sin, and not because of it; the same highest good might have been secured as well without sin as with it; and if there be any greater and less to omnipotence, we may say with

less expense without than with sin. Some have answered this optimistic argument by saying that it can not be affirmed that, among actually existing conditions of finite beings, there is any best, since nothing finite can be conceived to which omnipotence may not add something: This, though probably not satisfactory, is not evidently fallacious. If fallacious, its fallacy, so far as we know, has never been shown.

Another argument for the doctrine that God has decreed whatsoever comes to pass, or, stating it in the milder language of modern theologians, that the certainty of all events is secured by the decrees of God, is, that the sinful conduct of moral agents is taken up into the divine administration, and put under contribution for the accomplishment of divine purposes. This is another *non sequitur*; the fact that God causes the wrath of man to praise him is no proof that he decreed that wrath, or was at all dependent upon it for the accomplishment of his purposes. The argument stated syllogistically in a definite case would stand thus: Whatever God employs for the accomplishment of his purposes is essential to his purpose; God employed the malignity of the Jews to accomplish his purpose of redemption; therefore, the malignity of the Jews was essential to God's purpose of redemption. Is God thus dependent upon sin and sinners? Could not the world be redeemed

unless the Jews were malignant? If, when Christ came unto his own, they had received him; if, when he would have gathered them as a hen gathers her chickens, they had lovingly taken shelter under his wing, would a world of sinners have been left unredeemed? It can not be true, that God is dependent upon whatever he employs for the accomplishment of his purposes.

The argument for necessitarianism and the Calvinistic theory of the divine decrees, drawn from the admission of the absolute independent sovereignty of God, and from the admission that God governs the world in accordance with a plan infinitely wise, is wholly an assumption that God can not be a sovereign, that he can not have a plan of government, unless all that is not God be placed under the law of necessity; that is, unless all persons as well as things be reduced to the condition of machinery. On the contrary, we assume a divine government, absolute and independent; and a wise plan, purpose, decree,—if that term please better,—for that government, to which all existence and events are made tributary, and also assume the existence of an innumerable company of mortal earthly beings, and a larger company of higher spiritual intelligences, of whom every individual is endowed with alternativity, with an either-causal power, who are, within limits, first cause, have in respect to every act for which they

are responsible, a power to the contrary of that which transpires; we assume that God is competent to govern an infinite number of morally responsible beings, persons who have power within limits of determining what they will do; and we insist upon it that this conception of a divine government is incomparably superior to that of our opponents.

GOD IS AN ABSOLUTE SOVEREIGN.

“At the end of the days, I Nebuchadnezzar lifted up mine eyes unto heaven, and mine understanding returned unto me, and I blessed the Most High, and I praised and honored him that liveth forever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion and his kingdom is from generation to generation, and all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing, and he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, What doest thou? The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of isles be glad thereof. The Lord hath prepared his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom ruleth over all. Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations. Shall the axe boast itself against him that heweth therewith? or shall the saw magnify itself against him that shaketh it? O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing

formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?"

That God is a sovereign is not disputed. All who believe in God, who have faith in the divine personality, regard him as sole sovereign of the universe; all existences and events are subject to his control; without his power existences can not be, and without his permission events can not take place. His sovereignty is absolute. His will is law, and is independent of all other wills. He gives no account of his matters, and is accountable to no one for what he is, or for what he does; his counsels, plans, purposes, determinations, decrees are as eternal as himself. He has from all eternity decreed what he will do, and what he will permit his creatures to do. He decreed the creation of a material universe, and determined to govern inert matter by the law of necessity. At the time appointed, he executed his decree; he spake, and it was done, he commanded and it stood fast; and every particle of matter in the universe has been, is, and ever will be active only as it is acted upon. He decreed, and at the appointed time executed his decree to create living beings endowed with sentient, intelligent, and volitionating faculties, beasts of the field, fish of the sea, and fowls of the air. God's government of

the material world, and of living beings not endowed with moral faculties, is called his natural government, and the divine government of volitionating beings is called God's moral government.

NATURAL GOVERNMENT.

Does God govern the material world and irrational creatures by a mediate or by an immediate agency? Did God in the beginning volitionate all the forces by which the existence and history of things and irresponsible beings are what they are, or is each event of such existences and histories a product of an immediate volition of the infinite will? Does God govern the world by what are called "general laws," or by single separate volitions? This question may be stated in still other forms, but it is one and the same question, and involves the doctrine of God's natural government and the doctrine of miracles and a divine providence. To answer the question is confessedly difficult, to give an answer satisfactory to all thinkers is evidently, in the present state of human knowledge, impossible. To pronounce dogmatically that God governs the world thus and thus, is presumptuous. The most man can consistently undertake to do, in this case, is to determine how, with the facts before us, we must think of, and trust in, the divine administration of human affairs.

On the one hand, it is said by some that the

question is not pertinent; for if we suppose that in the beginning God volitionated all forces, still, as the number of intervening second causes makes no difference as to the originating first cause, we are compelled to think of God as cause of all that is, the same as if we think of each event as the resultant of a specific volition. For example, to suppose that God in the morning of creation volitionated into being the chemical forces by which cannon-balls are propelled is the same as to suppose that God himself is present on the battle-field carrying cannon-balls to and fro between the contending armies. In a word, since the divine will is sole originating force, and since it so remains whether results be immediate or through a greater or less number of intervening second causes, therefore, in thought, every event is a direct immediate result of a divine volition. In opposition to this view, it is said by some, on the other hand, that the supposition of an infinite First Cause implies the efficiency of second causes; and that the supposition that the efficiency of second causes was originally derived from the First Cause does not annihilate that efficiency. Then, if there be efficiency in second causes, the conception that the First Cause, so to speak, has left the scene of action, has left second causes to work their results, is not an incongruity. To conceive that God in the beginning wound up the machinery of the

universe, and then left it to work out the results necessarily following the efficiency with which he invested it, is not inconsistent with the facts in the case as we know them.

To our thought, the proper way for mortals to think of and trust in the divine administration of human affairs, so far as his natural government is concerned, lies between these two extremes. To conceive of God as having done his whole work in the beginning, and as having retired from the scene of active existences, or to conceive of him as an inactive observer of what transpires, is atheistic; it is equivalent to a banishment of God from the works of his hand; it is the contradictory of such Scriptures as assure us that a sparrow falleth not without our Father; that he sends the early and the latter rain; that he doeth his will among the armies of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth. To conceive of God as personally present and active every-where and always, doing every thing that is done by an immediate volition, if not pantheistic, has a pantheistic tendency—is an abatement of, or bar to, a proper reverence for the divine character, and fosters an irreverent familiarity with the divine idea. We conceive of God as having, in the beginning, invested matter with its natural forces, and fixed the laws by which these forces are and must be regulated; so that the formula, “God governs the world by gen-

eral laws," expresses a truth, but not the whole truth, for we also conceive of God as every-where present, and by an active agency "upholding all things by the word of his power;" so that, in a sense, the formula, "God does all that is done in the material world," also expresses a truth. We further conceive of God as so upholding and controlling natural forces and their laws, as that if he so will, for moral purposes, or for any purpose, to suspend, counteract, or contravene any of these forces and laws, he can and does so do; so that the formula, "God has left himself a margin for the manifestation of himself by miracles," also expresses a truth. And again, we conceive of God as so present and active in the whole domain of existences, that he puts all of nature's forces and laws under contribution for the accomplishment of his purposes, and actively "causes all things to work together for good," so that there is scope for a general and a particular providence.

That these conceptions are valid must be evident to at least every Christian believer. Suppose God did not govern the world by general laws; or, in other words, suppose there were no such thing as what is called the uniformity of nature; what would become of man in such a case? Suppose there were no regular succession of day and night, of seed-time and harvest; suppose food might or might not nourish the body,

and sleep might or might not yield rest to both body and mind; suppose fire might or might not burn; suppose water sometimes quenched and sometimes kindled; suppose medicine, under the same circumstances, sometimes cured and sometimes killed; in a word, suppose perpetual diversities in the order of happening in the whole course of earthly events, so that no man could depend on any thing, or forecast for future results; what motive for industry, for effort of any kind? What security for safety or well-being in any condition? Obviously the race must perish. If God did not govern the world by uniform laws, if there were nothing stable and immutable in God's government of the physical world, man could not, being what he is, subsist for a single day. Again, the common idea of the divine omnipresence makes him an observer of all that transpires. His omniscience involves the idea of a perfect cognizance of all existences and events, even in their most minute particulars; he numbers the hairs on our heads, and counts the sands upon the sea-shore. Is it, in this view, supposable that his omnipotence slumbers? Evidently his activity must be co-extensive with his knowledge and his presence. He upholds all things by the word of his power. If we suppose that the divine power was active only in the beginning, though with that supposition we take into account the idea that his

power was exercised in the light of an infinite wisdom and foresight, and for the purposes of infinite goodness, so that all existences and events be regarded as actually, though remotely, his personal work, intelligently designed for the greatest good of his creatures; it must still be evident that, constituted as men are, such a view is less favorable to piety than a conception of a present, personal, and immediate working. What God did for us millions of years ago, does not, naturally, awaken the spirit of grateful praise as does what he is doing for us now. In a word, the cognition of a present activity in the works of nature, with the apprehension of a divine personality as the author of that activity present here and now, working for our good, is essential to the higher forms of that devotion which the works of God are adapted and designed to awaken.

Again, to suppose that God is limited by what are called the laws of nature, is the contradictory of our intuitive apprehensions of the unlimited and infinite. To suppose that he has limited himself, so that he never does and never will do any thing different from, or contrary to, his usual method of working, is to deny the possibility of a special revelation to remove the foundations of a revealed religion, and leave the world ignorant of God, except so far as he may be known by a study of nature and providence. To suppose that in the

domain of matter God never does and never will vary from fixed laws is to make Christianity a falsehood, to render all religion, except a natural theism, impossible, to make prayer useless, and a trust in providence a baseless superstition. We conclude, then, as to God's government of the material world and of irresponsible beings—that is, as to what is called the natural government of God—that he governs by general laws, so that the conception of an investment of matter with certain forces operating under fixed laws is warranted by the facts in the case; and the supposition that, in a sense, with modifications, the machinery of the universe was so started in the beginning that it runs on of itself is a conception not wholly unwarranted. At the same time, God's will is sole originating force, and he is always every-where present, actively engaged in superintending, controlling, and subordinating to his will all the forces he has put in operation; so that we may truthfully conceive of him as doing whatever is done. He sends the rain, he clothes the field with grass, he gives strength to the sparrow's wing, and man goes forth to the labors of life in the strength that God giveth him. He holds the oceans in the hollow of his hand, and the winds obey his mandate. The brightness of the sun and the beauty of the moon are his. The mote that floats in the air, and the worlds that revolve in space, move as

they are moved by his power—all things are subject to his will.

When, for moral and religious purposes, God wills to make special manifestations of himself, he so suspends, controls, counteracts, the operating of natural law, as evinces his presence, power, and interposition. For the authentication of the mission of a commissioned messenger he does, through the agency of such messenger, what no man can do except God be with him. By miraculous interposition, by the incoming of divine power, God says to men, "This is my son, hear ye him;" this is a prophet sent from God, to reveal the divine will and make known to man what he needs to know of duty and of destiny. For this purpose God makes the waters of the sea stand in heaps; he sends manna from heaven, causes springs of water to gush forth in dry places, opens the eyes of those who are born blind, gives hearing to the deaf, and raises the dead. In like manner, when the interests of undying spirits require it, he gives his angels charge to hold up his people, lest they dash their foot against a stone. He gives to faith power to remove mountains and cast them into the midst of the sea. A thousand fall by the side of the righteous and ten thousand at their right hand, but the pestilence that walketh in darkness and the destruction that wasteth at noonday come not nigh

unto them who put their trust in the Lord. This is, as we are led by the facts in the case to think it. That this is an exhaustive view of the divine administration in the material world, it were folly to suppose; that it is truthful as far as it goes, we are fully persuaded; that clouds and darkness are round about him, and that man can understand but a very small part of his ways, is evident. These are conceptions having exclusive reference to that part of the universe with which the earth and the inhabitants thereof are connected. For aught that man knows to the contrary, there are systems of worlds where gravitation, cohesion, and chemical affinities are unknown—where what we call the laws of nature have no application or existence.

MORAL GOVERNMENT.

The moral government of God is his government of morally responsible beings, and consists in the means he employs for the security of moral excellence in their character and conduct. This includes the creation, preservation, and providential care of beings capable of moral excellence, the enactment and publication of moral laws, the bestowment of promised rewards in cases of obedience, and the execution of threatened penalties in cases of disobedience. Moral government as affected by redemption includes a system of means

by which rebels may be pardoned and restored to loyal obedience and to the immunities and privileges of citizenship. The distinction between the natural and moral government of God is founded, if properly considered, not only upon the different subjects to which it applies, but also upon the nature of the government itself. For, if we affirm that the distinction is founded solely upon a classification of subjects, it would be as scientific to give God's government of the stars one name, of the planets another, of animals another, of vegetables another, and so on indefinitely, as to distinguish between his government of irresponsible beings and things, and of beings morally responsible. Especially would it seem appropriate to distinguish the government of God by one name for that of matter, and another for that of mind; and again, in that of mind we should need still another distinction between the government of merely intellectual beings, and of beings capable of moral obligation. The category of responsible and irresponsible existences is exhaustive, and the government of these two differs essentially in one sole respect; namely, in the one God's control is absolute and efficacious; it infallibly secures results; in the other his control is not determinative of results. In the one the law of necessity prevails without exception, whatever is, is by the power of God, and there is no power external to

the divine will by which it might be otherwise; in the other, the law of contingency prevails; whatever is, is by an adequate power divinely bestowed, which is also itself an adequate power to the contrary. The cause of irresponsible existences, with all the phenomena they exhibit, is the sole will of God; he might have willed that they should be otherwise than they are, but having willed their existences as they are, they are thereby constituted second and unipotent causes, adequate only to one sole result. But in cases of responsible action, the agent is, by the constitution of his nature, made a first and pluripotent cause, adequate to either of several different results.

This common distinction of the government of God into natural and moral is, then, scientific, because natural, and founded upon a radical difference in kind. The divine control over inert matter, over vegetable and animal life, and over beings merely intellectual and sentient—not moral and religious—is a control by an efficient agency, by a causative power, invariably and immediately producing its designed results. The divine control over beings moral, religious, and therefore responsible, is entirely of a different nature, and may be characterized as a *persuasive power*. Beings endowed with the power of choice are influenced by others in the choices they make, in no other way than by the presentation to their intelligence of motives. To

control such a being by a determinative power is to take away the power of choice—to destroy his moral nature, and reduce him to the character and condition of mere machinery. This last named affirmation is denied, and it is, on the contrary, affirmed, that motives may be presented which will infallibly secure results—as infallibly as the connection between a physical cause and its effect—without at all destroying the freedom and consequent responsibility of the agent. By those making this affirmation, it is also affirmed that the divine control by motives or otherwise over the choices of moral agents is as absolute, as efficiently determinative, as his control over natural phenomena, so that the law of necessity or of invariable sequence is as dominant, as universally prevalent, in the domain of morals as in that of physics.

The controversy at this point turns entirely upon the sole question whether any of the subjects of the divine government are endowed with an either-causal, an alternative power. Is there in the universe, besides the divine will—if that be even an exception—such a thing as a power equally adequate for either of several different results? If not, and God's will be such a power, then God is not only sole first cause, but sole agent, and his government is one and the same over all existences and events, whether of matter or mind, whether of physics or of morals—the distinction

into natural and moral is a distinction where there is no difference. The ideas of moral desert, of reward and punishment, with all cognate ideas, are chimeras, mere conceptions to which, in actual existence, there are no corresponding entities. To affirm that God is, by his nature, an alternative power, a pluripotent cause; that all moral beings are created in this feature of his image, are by their Creator endowed, within limits, with this same alternativity, and to maintain these affirmations with arguments, would be to discuss what must appear at nearly every point in anthropology, and if entered upon here would cause unnecessary repetition. Let it therefore suffice in this connection to say, every instance of conscious obligation, every compunction of conscience for wrong-doing, every hope of reward, every apprehension of accountability, every expectation of retribution—all the phenomena of man's moral consciousness—are proofs positive, logical grounds for certain knowledge, that man is endowed with all the elements of a moral responsibility.

It is axiomatic that that for which any agent is morally responsible must be within his control. If man be responsible for obedience or disobedience to the divine commands, then obedience and disobedience are both equally within his power. Which of them shall result is not determined by any thing external to himself. His own power of

choice selects the one, it being at the same time a power equally adequate to select the other. That for which an agent is morally responsible must be an election; that is, a selection with an alternative. A compulsory constraint, be it from a direct, immediate, overpowering operation on the volitionating power, or from a mediate array of motives before the intelligence, or by any other means, a constraint such that there is but one way left, so that the man can not do otherwise, such a constraint must, in the nature of the case, as it destroys all power of choice, also remove from the agent all responsibility for results. To this it is objected, that to suppose of future events that two or more different results are equally possible—that the opposite of what will be is just as possible as that that will be—is to deny all government in respect to such events. We reply, Of course it is a denial of such a government as the objector contends for. He means by the term government absolute control, determinative agency, necessitating efficiency. This is our conception of the government of things, but is essentially different from our conception of the government of moral beings. God governs the world and all the events that make up its history, the free acts of moral beings included; but his government of the latter differs essentially from that of all else. He has decreed what he will do and what he will permit. His

foresight of what will be prevents the occurrence of unexpected emergencies, and enables him to take up into the policy of his administration all that is. Infinite wisdom and infinite power are adequate to all that a perfect government requires, even though the subjects of that government be fully endowed with freedom both to and from an indefinite number of independent acts.

We have said that the method of influencing the volitionating power is by the presentation of motives. God, in his moral government, works in this way: He places before the mind good and evil, life and death, reward and punishment. He expostulates, entreats, persuades—"Why will ye die, O house of Israel?" "Now, then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God." The whole plan of redemption—the power of the cross, the teaching and striving of the Spirit, the agency of truth—with all the instrumentalities of the Church, are so many persuading motives presented men to induce them to choose the right and avoid the wrong. But none of them separately, nor all combined, secure results. The issue is dependent upon the man himself—he chooses whom he will serve. He may know that the Lord is God—that is, he may have every motive for right service, and yet choose to serve Baal; and it is solely because he

is endowed with power to choose the Lord or Baal, the one equally with the other, that he is responsible for the choice he makes.

But it is still insisted that motives are causes of action—that they sustain to volition the relation of cause and effect. We deny this, and affirm that they are conditions or occasions of volition, not causes; nay, more, mind can act in the absence of motives, as in the case of an equilibrium, when there is motive for action, but no motive for one act rather than another. You are called upon to tell of an unknown number whether it be even or odd; you have a strong motive, it may be, to speak rather than be silent, but no motive for one rather than the other, and yet you speak promptly—that is, you volitionate a choice in the absence of a motive. It is said there is no moral character in such acts. Of course there is not; but that is not the question now before us; the question is, whether motive be cause and volition effect, so that without the one the other can not be. But again, it is said such cases are trifling and exceptional, and therefore not proper data for philosophic inference. We reply, such cases are more numerous than all others combined. We volitionate in thousands of indifferent things every day of life. Cases of conscious virtue and vice are, in comparison with these indifferent decisions, very few and far between.

PRAYER.

The view we have taken of the government of God in both its aspects, furnishes great and comforting encouragements to a habit of prayer. It is not only Scriptural, but also rational and useful, that men "pray without ceasing, and in all things give thanks." God is every-where, and has all persons and things subject to his will. Man's well-being is conditioned very largely upon his connection with his fellow-men and with his physical surroundings. God has endowed man with the power of choice, within limits, as to what he shall be, what he shall do, and how he shall be circumstanced, and has revealed to man that it is his will that man exercise this choice, and in prayer express to God his desires, with assurances that prayer, properly offered in a proper spirit, will be heard and answered.

It is not desirable that the uniformity of nature or the free agency of man should be frequently interfered with; contrariwise, it is for the greatest good of all that these should be steadily conserved. Man, therefore, may not expect that prayer for an interference with these, except in cases of great emergency, of extreme necessity, will be effectual. Prayer offered in submission to, and in accordance with, the will of God will secure for him that prays what he would not receive if he did not

pray. "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened." The divine control over all persons and things is adequate basis for that policy of government which makes prayer the stated antecedent of the reception of such blessings as it may please God to condition upon it.

PROVIDENCE.

In like manner, a trust in Providence is both Scriptural and rational. God's supervision of all events furnishes abundant opportunity for such direction as may be needful for the well-being of his people; and if it be his will so to direct occurrences as that the steps of such as acknowledge the Lord in all their ways shall be specially directed, there is certainly reasonable assurance that the steps of such shall be so directed—that there shall take place for the benefit of the truly pious what would not take place were they not thus minded toward the Lord. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God—to them that are the called according to his purpose.

ANGELS.

The subjects of God's moral government are all beings capable of moral obligation. Among these are not only men, but also angels. Of these

we have no knowledge, except so far as is revealed to us in the Word of God. They are superior to man; are of different ranks and orders; are very numerous; are wholly spiritual, not material, though capable of assuming material forms and appearances. They have great power, and can do wonders, but their power is derived and dependent. They can not create, or work miracles, except as specially empowered. They can not act without means. They can not search the hearts of men; their interventions with the affairs of men are only such as God permits or commands. They are limited as to place; they are somewhere, not every-where; but can move from place to place with great rapidity. They were originally holy, but were subjected to a period of probation, in which some kept their first estate and others did not. They are employed in the worship of God, and in obedience to God's commands they come among men and specially minister to the heirs of salvation. Evil, fallen angels, or devils, are permitted, for the trial of men, to tempt men to sin, and to hinder saints in the service of God. Their prince, or chief, called Satan, is specially represented as of a most intensely malignant disposition, seeking the destruction of all in his power. In ancient times diabolical spirits took possession of men; their earthly priests uttered oracles, to which the people listened and servilely submitted

themselves. Since the coming of Him whose mission was to destroy the works of the devil, those demoniacal possessions have disappeared, and those oracles are hushed in silence.

INDEX TO VOLUME I.

FIGURES REFER TO PAGES.

- ABSOLUTE—The absolute knowable, 309.
- Angels, 525.
- Anti-theistic Theories, 284.
- Anthropopathy, 310.
- Apologetics—State of mind prerequisite to the study of, 22; postulates theism, 22; the same substantially in all ages, 226; as opposed to Jewish objections, 226; in reply to pagan objections, 227.
- Apologetes—Justin Martyr, Tatian, Athenagoras, Tertullian, Origen, Athanasius, and Augustine, 229; Dr. Saml. Clarke, and Cudworth, 230; Paley, 233; Bishop Watson, 236; Richard Watson, 237; Dr. Alexander, 240; Hopkins, 241; Bishop Thomson and Dr. Cocker, 242.
- Arianism, 380; Christ a creature, 380; the Holy Spirit created by Christ, 481.
- Atheism—Not provable, 285; defined, 285; alleged argument for answered, 286; its efforts to account for existencies, failures, absurdities, 286.
- Athanasian Creed, 378, 398.
- Attributes of God, 308; doctrine of attributes fundamental, 308; natural and moral attributes, 333. (See Unity, Spirituality, etc.)
- Apostles, integrity of, 90.
- BENEVOLENCE of God, 335.
- Bible—As a book of history and of morals, 217; as a system of religion, 218; unity and harmony of, 224; preservation of, 63; writers of neither deceivers nor deceived, 65; rationalistic interpretation of, 65, 69; authenticity, genuineness, and inspiration of defined, 116; historic records authenticated by *prima facie* evidence, 149, 220; incidental allusions correspondent with known facts, 151.
- Bible proofs of Trinity—God is one, the Father is a person and God, 395; the Son is God, 396; the Holy Spirit is a person and God, 480; direct proofs, 491.
- CAUSE and effect, 273.
- Christ—Humanity of, 397; pre-existence, 400; divine titles, 403; God, John i, 1, 404; Rom. ix, 5, 410; Son of God, 415; Christ not the Son of God because of the miraculous conception, 416; nor because of his resurrection, 417; nor because of his Messiahship, 418; to claim divine sonship blasphemy, claiming equality with God, 419; not the Son of God because first created, 424; nor because the greatest being next

- to God, 429; Christ is the Son of God by an eternal generation, 432; generation distinguished from creation, 431; "only begotten" not synonymous with well beloved, 436; Lord a title of Christ, 438; also of God, 440; used to translate the incommunicable name, 441; Jehovah the name God will not give to another, 441; Jehovah of the Old Testament and Christ of the New identified, 442; Logos, 454; divine attributes ascribed to Christ, eternity and immutability, 455; ubiquity, 458; omniscience, 462; exegesis of Mark xii, 32, 463; omnipotence, 464; divine works ascribed to Christ, creation, 464; preservation and government, 467; forgiveness of sin, 467; divine worship rendered to Christ, 468; the doctrine of Trinity explains the Scripture testimony concerning Christ, all other theories leave the Bible unexplained and injuriously misleading, 477.
- Christianity the true religion or there is none, 218.
- Conservation and correlation of forces, 289.
- Creeds—Trinitarian, 376; Athanasian, 378, 398; Chalcedon, 398; Constantinopolitan, 481; of Toledo, 482.
- DEPRAVITY a fact, regeneration sole adequate remedy therefor, 144; 220.
- Docetæ, 397.
- Dualism, 305.
- ETERNAL generation, 432.
- Eternity of God, 315; not an eternal *now* in such a sense as excludes succession, 316.
- Evolution, 293; not proved, 297; only claimed that it may be, 298; the contrary the actual law of earthly constructions, 299.
- Evidences—External, internal, collateral, rational, and authenticating defined, 118: external (see miracles and prophecy), internal, 126; conclusions from, 156; objections to from absurdity, 158; mystery, 159; error, 160; defect, 164; summary of, 217.
- Experience—Argument from for the inspiration of the Scriptures, 217.
- FOREKNOWLEDGE and free-will, 331; the same and divine sovereignty, 502.
- GOVERNMENT of God—According to an eternal purpose, 495; divine decrees do not make the opposite of what is an impossibility, 496; theistic fatalism and Augustinian necessity admit only of a government according to natural fitness, 496; government does not postulate a plan which excludes the possibility of an opposite, 498; to affirm that it does implies a malignant deity, 499; replying against necessitarianism not replying against God, 500; foreknowledge does not prove necessity, 502; the actual existence of sin and misery does not prove that they are products of the divine decrees, 503; nor does the fact that they are incorporated

- into the divine administration, 504; the administration of government does not reduce persons to machinery, 505; God an absolute sovereign, 506; natural government not solely by general laws nor by immediate volitions, but by both, 508; a margin for a particular providence and for miracles, 510; moral government distinguished from natural, 516; contingency prevails in the former and necessity in the latter, 518; moral government a control by motives, 523; both moral and natural government consistent with the efficacy of prayer and trust in providence, 524.
- Gnostics, 397.
- God—Idea of, intuitive, 126, 219, 248; how developed, 252; not originated by a process of reasoning, 257; Bible idea of, 262; argument for, ontological, 269; cosmological, 271; teleological, 274; moral, 278; God not sole agent, 324; attributes of, unity, 312; spirituality, 313; eternity, 315; immutability, 317; omnipotence, 318; omnipresence, 325; omniscience, 328; wisdom, 333; goodness, 335; holiness, 359; justice, 363; an absolute sovereign, 506.
- Goodness of God, 335. (See Theodicy.)
- Gospel—success of, during the first three centuries, 180; progress during all the ages since its establishment, 189; not a failure, 195; effects of, 197, 207; benevolent intent of, 198.
- HOLINESS of God, 359; idea of, anthropopathic, 360; is God a law unto himself? are there eternal principles according to which he wills and acts? 361; divine holiness infinitely intense, 362.
- Holy Spirit personal and divine, 480; doctrine of, as stated by the Apostolic Fathers, 480; Arius affirmed that the Spirit was created by Christ, 481; Apostolic Creed concerning, and the symbol of Constantinople, 481; of Toledo, 482; divinity of Spirit not questioned—personality, point to be proved, 482; a person what? 483; figurative language to be interpreted by literal, 484; the doctrine of procession from the Father and the Son, Filioque, 484; personality proved, 485; influences of sole remedy for man's necessities, 146.
- IMMORTALITY of Man—idea of intuitive, 133, 219.
- Immutability of God, 317; does not antagonize personality, does not affirm inactivity, principles invariable, application of principles varies with the subjects to which applied, 318.
- Infinite—the infinite knowable, 309.
- Inspiration defined, 116; doctrine of discussed, 176.
- JUSTICE of God—term defined, 363; renders what is due, 364; sense of justice the same in all beings, its decisions harmonize with facts presented, 365; God appeals to man's sense of justice in vindication of his ways, 365; commercial,

- legislative, judicial, vindicatory, 366; justice, theologically considered, has to do mostly with the question, What is due the transgressor? what is the demerit of sin? 367; the purpose of penalty, not due as a remuneration, nor is the reformation of the culprit its object, 369; sin has demerit in itself, obligation to punishment naturally due to the violation of just authority, 370; though it be possible that God may remit penalties threatened, he can not withhold blessings promised, 372.
- LOGOS, 404, 454.
- Love of God, 335.
- MANICHEANS, 397.
- Materialism, 287; not proved by the fact that human knowledge commences with sensation, 279; mind and matter differ, 278, 287; defined by materialists, 295.
- Matter—eternity of, 291.
- Miracles—alleged in Scripture as evidence of inspiration, 47, 222; argument from, determinative, 48; definition of, 53; possibility of, 49; probability of, 51; objections to, 53; evidences of, 59; interpretation of, 98; of Moses, 70; of Joshua, 77; of Christ's resurrection, 82.
- Monophysites, 398.
- Monothelites, 398.
- Moral Agency and Responsibility—idea of intuitive, 130, 219; a proof of the divine existence, 283.
- OMNIPOTENCE, 318; idea of power, finite power limited to the use of means, infinite will efficacious without the intervention of second causes, 319; does not include impossibilities nor exclude inconsistencies, 321; is expressly contradictory of positivism, 322; God not sole agent, 324.
- Omnipresence, 325; idea of, anthropopathic 326; God not present by diffusion, nor merely by his knowledge and power, but actually both as to substance and attribute, 328.
- Omniscience, 328; knowledge in God same in kind as in his creatures, 329; God is said to know not figuratively but literally, 330; prescience reconciled with free-will, 331.
- Optimism, 340; evil not the necessary antecedent of good, the good that comes of evil might have been without it, 341; sin evil *per se*, good in spite of it, 342; "What is best" not proved, alleged argument fallacious, 343; if the present system of the universe be the best, it is made so by the possibility of moral desert and the provisions of redemption, 344; to say that God prefers sin to holiness when sin occurs blasphemous, 345; neither Universalism nor annihilation nor the theory of pre-existence solves the problem of theodicy, 346; the question of evil considered with sole reference to this life, 349; all men believe God is good, none can believe he is malignant, 350; benevolent contrivances prove a benevolent contriver, 350; death

- by violence better for the dying than by decay or acute disease, 351; much of suffering self-imposed, adequate remedy provided for all forms of evil, 351.
- PANTHEISM—not well understood, 303; materialistic and idealistic defined, 304; infinite universal being, in two forms, one of thought and one of extension, 304; all forms of pantheism fatalistic, 305.
- Patricianism, 379, 397.
- Phantasiastæ, 397.
- Philosophy (modern) of the absolute and infinite, 322, 337.
- Polytheism, 306.
- Positivism, 288; fatalistic, 322; pantheistic, 323.
- Prayer—efficacy of not assured except by revelation, 32; provided for in the divine administration, 324.
- Prophecy—argument stated, 101; objections to, 102; Daniel's, 104; concerning the Jews, 108; concerning Christ, 112.
- Providence—doctrine of not made known by natural religion, 30; particular providence assured by divine government, 525.
- REASON—use of, in theistic studies, 258.
- Religion natural—the teachings thereof unavailable for the masses of mankind, 33; liable to corruption from admixture with error, 38; inadequate for morals and religion as evinced by the facts of history, 39; natural and revealed religion distinguished, 120.
- Resurrection—of Christ, 82; sole compensation for the fear of death, 147.
- Retribution (future)—idea of intuitive, 137.
- Revelation—fundamental to Christianity, 21, 222; arguments for, apprehended by the logical faculty, 22; possible, 23; alleged antecedent improbability of, 24; the Scriptures claim to be a, 46; if they are not, there is none, 218.
- Right and wrong—idea of intuitive, 128, 219; law of right eternal, 361.
- SABELLIANISM, 379.
- Salvation (by works, by faith)—Paul and James reconciled, 166.
- Scriptures (See Bible.)
- Semi-Arianism, 380.
- Sin—pardon of not assured by natural religion, 25; a fact, atonement sole remedy, 141; consciousness of a proof of divine existence, 283.
- Skepticism universal, impossible, 285.
- Socinianism, 379.
- Spirituality of God, 313; the contradictory of materialism, 314.
- THEODICY, 338; to exclude the possibility of sin is to exclude the possibility of moral desert, 339; whence comes evil? not by chance, by fate, or by the decrees of God, but by free-will, 352; creation made evil possible, divine power did not prevent it, God permitted it, how is this reconcilable with divine benevolence? 353; no man

complains that God is a hard master, 354; adequate remedy provided, 355; this is well for the saved, but how as to the lost? 355; any condition of existence God will permit better than non-existence, 356.

Trinity, 374; a doctrine of revelation, above reason, not contrary to it, 375; the Apostolic Fathers used New Testament formulas, 381; explanations and illustrations useless, mostly injurious, 382; antecedent objections held by unbelievers to be decisive, 383; not absurd, 384; its mystery not held as an object of faith,

only faith in the fact required, 386; to require faith in a divinely attested fact as a condition of fellowship not illiberal, 387; not useless because fundamental to the Christian system, 389; because every doctrine of religion is modified by it, 390; (See Bible Proofs of Trinity); is the doctrine revealed, the only question, the manner of the revelation not important, 491; Bible language such as implies the doctrine, 492.

UNITY of God, 312.

WISDOM of God, 333.

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library



1 1012 01144 9263

